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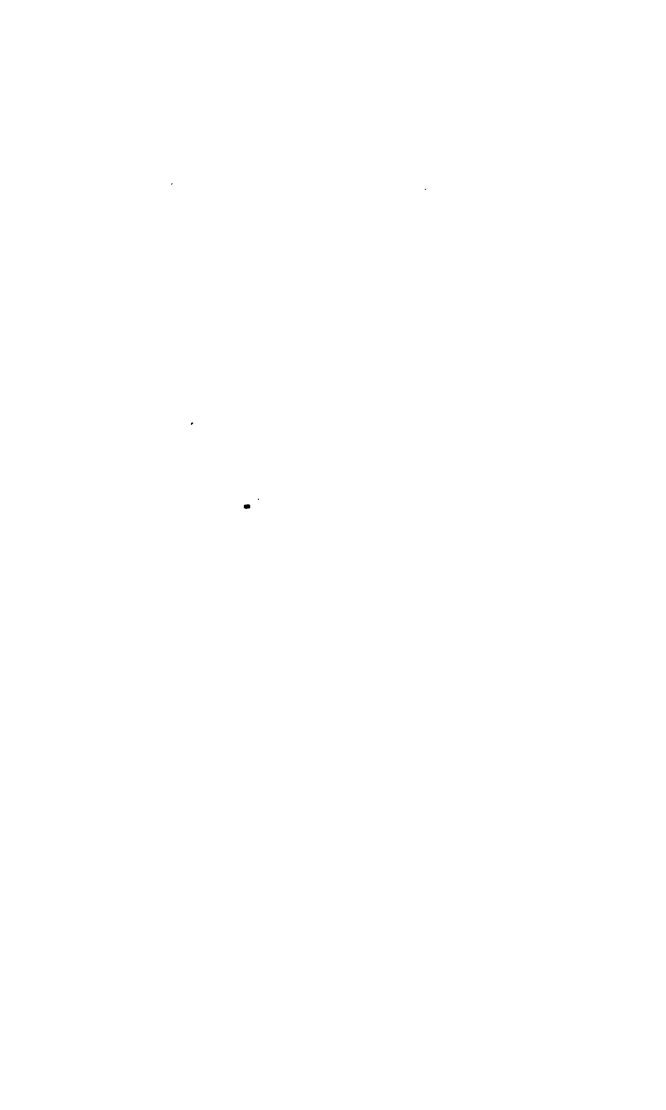
PERSONAL  
PIETY













# PERSONAL PIETY



**ALEXANDER STRAHAN, PUBLISHER**

ON, . . . . . 148 St

YORK, . . . . . 178 Gr



# PERSONAL PIETY

A HELP TO CHRISTIANS TO WALK  
WORTHY OF THEIR CALLING

By C. T.

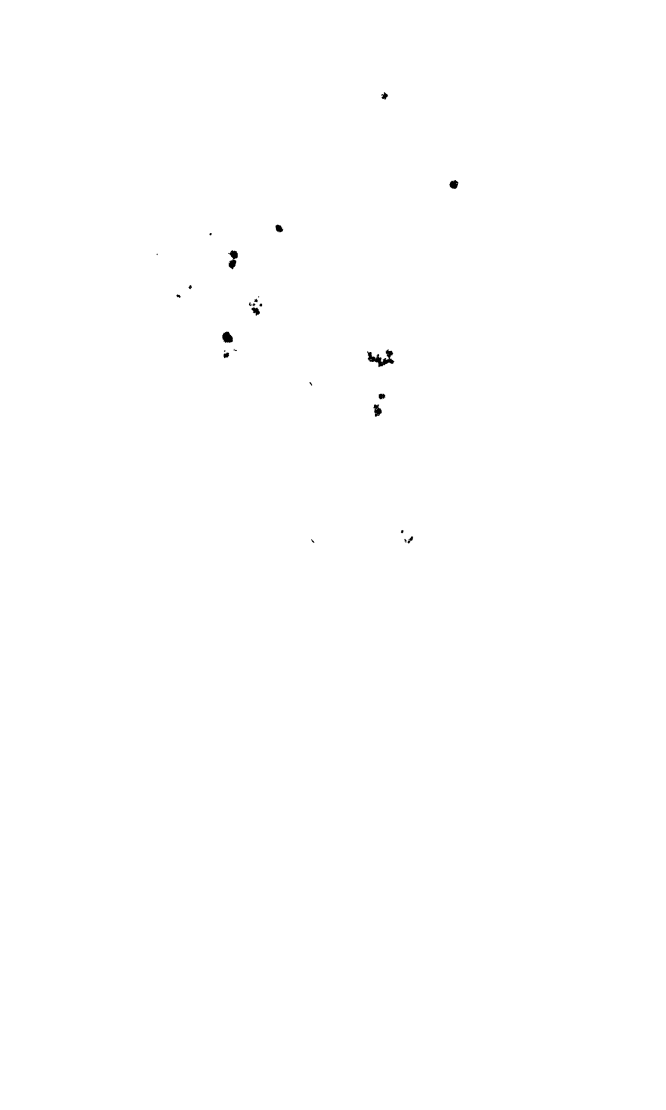


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## INTRODUCTION.



WE all know the importance of example. The instinct of imitation is seen in the child, long before he is capable of any other instruction ; and, in after-life, the same propensity is discovered in the almost universal conformity of ~~our~~ morals and habits to those of the people around us. It is very humiliating, but we must see things as they are, and there is no disguising the fact, that the gospel has been, and is, shorn of its power, not so much by any defect in the learning and eloquence of the pulpit, as by the sad discrepancies which the world detects between the teachings of the Sabbath and our conduct during the rest of the week.

This remark applies to the ministry and laity alike. I know how prone men are to prescribe to ministers a standard of holiness nothing short of perfection. This proceeds not only from a cavilling spirit, but from a desire to have pastors to whom, in the hour of need, they can say, "*Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.*"



es the same holiness in all. And it is  
of this silent but resistless eloquence  
ing, which, more than anything else  
than all the impotent sophistries  
, has hindered, and is hindering,  
hs of the truth.

has not felt the power of simple,  
l, consistent piety? Which of us but  
cases where Christians of very high  
ts and attainments have yet, by piety  
tegrity, commanded universal and  
bled respect, not only for themselves,  
religion they profess? "Ye are  
es," says the Saviour. And it will  
e gospel as with any other cause.  
l listen with jealousy and suspicion  
dings of official advocates. It is to  
y of the witnesses they will look, and  
l their verdict be decided. This is



- the children of light—what a melancholy contrast
- between their conduct, and the faith by which
- they profess to be governed!

- We are sometimes surprised, and even staggered, when we consider the little progress which the gospel has made, and is making, in the world. In fact, however, there is no cause for surprise. For if we examine the history of the church so miscalled, what is it? The annals of our race contain no pages so dark, so stained with cruelty and blood.

Even at this day, what is the character of too many of those ecclesiastical bodies which arrogate the title of The True Church? Is not an external organisation substituted for Christ? And the very vices which are assailed most directly by the gospel, pride, the love of pre-eminence, the lust of power—the very passions against which the entire spirit of the gospel wages an internecine war—are not these vices and passions, and in their most arrogant forms, sanctified in those churches?

When we reflect upon these mournful facts, can we wonder that the religion of Jesus has not won more rapid and illustrious victories? Beautifully simple, and yet irresistibly potent—"fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners"—were the first churches. Those churches were not bodies artificially framed to



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They were the free, spontaneous  
associations of those whose hearts  
angcd by the Holy Spirit, and w  
glowed with the love of Christ. I  
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souls were melted and at once fuse  
n a brotherhood of faith and love  
to Him who had loved them unto c  
rgument is necessary to shew tha  
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g the full inspiration of the cross  
ng an atmosphere yet warm with  
tions of their ascended Lord, they c  
time and talents and property to a  
indeed, but infinitely transcending :



religion, forms, rites, creeds, "linen decencies," apocryphal successions, gifts invisible to man and to God himself, puerile manipulations, mystical and cabalistic virtues, and sacred enclosures where salvation is conferred by machinery,—these are the glory of such churches. Can the gospel be advanced by these figments of the dark ages? What are such churches good for, but to delude the masses, and subjugate them to priestly dominion? "All this clamour about church," says Dr Arnold, "is only a clamour about priest." Nor is this spiritual ambition confined to any church. With his idiomatic terseness, Milton long ago remarked with great truth, that "*Presbyter is only priest written large.*"

The secret of the power put forth by the first churches is an open secret. It was not the number nor talents of the preachers. Nor did they possess any light, nor were they animated by any promises of spiritual aid which are denied to us. It was their elevated practical piety which secured their noble triumphs over the pride of kings and the counsels of rulers—over the scoffs of philosophers and the malignant passions of the multitude.

How simple and energetic was the faith of those apostolic men! What ardent love! What immolation of self on the great altar of the



other relations being subordinated to allegiance. In a word, what a stern fidelity to truth and integrity and his being the common proverb then would affirm the utter impossibility of. You might as well hope to move a rock from his principles."

If the world is ever to be converted, the Church must not only be restored to their simplicity of organisation, but to their original piety. The Reformation of Luther was glorious ; but a reformation more glorious is needed—a reformation of the characters and lives of Christians. The Church is sometimes spoken of as an abomination and we are told of its unity and its



all its holiness to a church. And it is as these graces are quickened and invigorated, that the word of the Lord will have free course and be glorified.

Some persons have wished that ministers were now endowed with the power of working miracles ; but we do not want miracles. We have the truth and the consciences of men. Let the truth only be enforced by the holy lives of Christians, and results will follow more noble than any which could be wrought by the most brilliant miracles. On every side we hear of the danger to be apprehended from the mistranslation of this or that Greek word : but all the errors of all the interpreters of the sacred books are harmless when compared with the falsification of the Scriptures—their spirit and doctrine—in the covetousness and worldliness and immoralities of the professed disciples of Jesus. We live in a busy world and a stirring age, and people trouble themselves very little about Hebrew points and Greek texts ; but the “living epistles are known and read of all men.” Faith, assurance, orthodoxy, spirituality. Very well. Those around us, however, do not comprehend these things. But they do comprehend honesty, and purity, and disinterestedness, and truth, and charity. And it is by these virtues that our light is so to shine “that men, seeing our



... unjust towa  
" John the Baptist came n  
ing, and they say, He hat  
man came eating and dr  
Behold a man gluttonous,  
friend of publicans and sin  
consider the depravity of t  
marvel is that the world is as  
faults of professed' Christian  
more than others ?" The w  
expect more of us. "Ye a  
world." Is it surprising tha  
if they see darkness where l  
"That ye may be blameless  
sons of God, without rebuke,  
crooked and perverse nation  
shine as lights in the world  
word of life." What an id  
Spirit here give of the ne  
and reason "



keeper. 'Suppose,' said I, 'that one of these lights should go out?' 'Never! impossible!' he cried, with a sort of consternation at the bare hypothesis. 'Sir,' said he, pointing to the ocean, 'yonder, where nothing can be seen, there are ships going by to every part of the world. If to-night one of my burners were to go out, within six months would come a letter, perhaps from India, perhaps from America, perhaps from some place I never heard of, saying, on such a night, at such an hour, the light of Calais burned dim; the watchman neglected his post, and vessels were in danger. Ah, sir, sometimes, in the dark nights, in the stormy weather, I look out to sea, and feel as if the eye of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out! Burn dim! Oh, never!'"

May He "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," arm us all with a vigilance ever wakeful as that of this guardian of the French beacon! May we ever feel that the eyes of God, and of the whole world, are upon us! And, in eternity, may we not only see that no souls have perished through our faithlessness, but may we be among those who, sustained and triumphing by almighty grace, having turned many to righteousness, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever!







that were once reclaimed to Christ are now lost. Paganism and Mohammedanism now prevail where Christianity was once in the ascendant. In many of the countries of modern Europe, where the Reformation once flourished, infidelity and Romanism have the sway.

Now, why this appalling disproportion between the dominion of Christ and the prince of darkness? What is it that so mightily impedes the progress of heaven-born Christianity? What restricts her dominion to so small a proportion of the earth? Why are there so many millions in Christendom with whom the gospel is powerless? Why, amid all the divinely-appointed means for the world's conversion, do so few become real Christians? In our very midst there are thousands who do not believe Christianity is divine. Under the full blaze of the written and preached truth, infidelity and contempt of the gospel stalk abroad with demoniac confidence.

Now, why, it is most important to inquire, is the gospel so ineffective? Where lies the main obstacle to the progress of Christianity? It has now been eighteen centuries since the atonement was made, and the Spirit in His fulness given. Why, during this long period, has Christianity made so few and such partial triumphs? *For the glory of God and the good of the world.*



...restricted sway of our  
owing to any limitation or inel  
ment of Christ. That remove  
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braces in its provisions the ent

Nor is the comparatively  
Christians in the world to be  
absence or limitation in the p  
He is as really present, and is as  
able to convict, convert, and sanc  
was on the day of Pentecost.  
something on our part that rest  
vents that full measure of His in  
communicated.

Nor can the great evil we are d  
cribed to any want of adaptation  
the gospel. That, consisting of a  
and a renewing Spirit, is now, a  
rst preached, "the new



souls at the rate of thirty millions a year pass into eternity uncleansed, and consequently unsaved by the blood of Christ, as the result of God's sovereignty, were a reflection on His throne and character. He is indeed a Sovereign. His decrees and foreknowledge do extend to and control everything in the universe; but they interfere not with our freedom, and therefore do not relieve us of the responsibility for the limited spread of Christianity. In this thing there is a mystery; but it is the mystery of selfishness and uncaring inactivity on the part of the friends of God. Had the successive generations of professed Christians fallen in with the divine arrangement for the conversion of the world, long ago "the heathen would have been given to Christ for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession."

Nor, further, is the disproportionately small number of Christians in the world attributable to any want of logical evidence for the truth of Christianity. No other subject claiming human belief has a hundredth part of such proofs. Numerous miracles, with their appeals to the senses, prophecies becoming facts as the stream of time has rolled on, the character and precepts of Christ, and history with her thousand chapters, attest with the clearness of a sunbeam that *Christianity, in the abstract, is the ambassadress*



to write books and prove that the gospel in itself. There are no more proofs that heaven is the work of God, than the gospel, as it is revealed in the from Him. Mankind no more do origin of the latter than they do former. Hence our once mighty Paleys are becoming obsolete. No ten thousand is kept from being from scepticism as to the divinity itself.

Nor has the gospel been so resplendent because there has not been bringing the world under its influence. Centuries have elapsed since Christ's atonement, and



these New-Testament Elijahs fallen upon all succeeding Elishas, the sun in his journey round our globe would not, perhaps, shine upon a nation nor a tribe that would not now be reflecting Christ's image and honouring Christ's name. There has been ample time for the grand experiment.

Nor, furthermore, can the tardy progress of Christianity be referred, mainly, to the many doctrinal errors that have prevailed. These have hindered the coming of Christ's kingdom. The Scriptures and the history of the Church show that there is a connexion between one's belief and his life. Fundamental errors concerning the atonement of Christ, the nature and necessity of the Spirit's influence, the nature and necessity of regeneration, the depravity of the human heart, have been and are now mighty barriers in the way of the world's conversion, and should with all haste be banished from the earth. We are unwavering advocates for a sound creed. In another connexion, we could show that so long as errors exist concerning one cardinal feature of the gospel, it is vastly important for us to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Let our theology be pure. In the interpretation of the Scriptures let us be strict constructionists. Let every Bible truth, in its revealed proportions, be clung to as



erty in the way of the world's conversion : does the gospel fall short of its efficacy, because mankind have grown more depraved. When, at first, Christianity was first preached, over the whole Roman Empire, the people were utterly depraved ; they were more wicked than that now. No doubt the world is more wicked than the last fifty years, upon the whole. At no former period were mankind more accessible to Christianity than they are now. Then, we raise the question again, why is it that in vast regions abroad, and so many millions of people, unsubdued by the cross of Christ, owing to a paucity of the means of grace, in these heathen lands, and in many portions of the world, the absence of Christianity is attributable to the absence of the annals of the world.



there is a house of worship, in which resounds, Sabbath after Sabbath, the gospel from faithful ministers. The press daily multiplies good books by millions. All churches have, by scores, their societies for the promotion of the different interests of the gospel. Every church holds yearly its protracted meeting. Sabbath schools in every direction are in operation. In the family, and in the social circle, ten thousand professors daily pray with and for the irreligious : and yet, amid all these heavenly instrumentalities, a vast majority live and die in unbelief. Around us are hundreds who are sermon-proof. In very many cases the children of professing parents are infidels. True, these agencies are blessed to the conversion of many ; but the number they save is discouragingly small compared with the number on whom they are brought to bear in vain. These means may be multiplied and diffused a thousandfold ; but unless they are enforced and ratified by a corresponding personal holiness, the victories of the gospel will still be circumscribed.

In fine, are our means and resources inadequate to evangelise the world ? In commanding His people to convert the world, has Christ required of them an impossibility ? Has He left them without sufficient means to achieve this *sublime end* ? No ; they are not straitened in Him. The work is the greatest and most diffi-



Progress of Christi  
doubtless, both on the part  
foes of Christ, have hindered  
for which both are respon  
down as our most solemn  
*great obstacle in the way of*  
*gospel* is the low tone of pra  
*the professed friends of Christ*  
visedly and emphatically.  
shew what are not the pri  
that every reader may the  
realisingly ponder the mai  
responsibility for the slow  
tianity lies at the door of those  
the disciples of Christ. In th  
misrepresented the religion  
thereby repelled from it the v  
fault on the part of the church  
exculpates mankind for their  
blame.



the overflowing glories of the gospel, for which they are accountable, and which they should at once put away ; but none, nor all others combined, so much retard the very kingdom of Christ, as the want of a higher standard of personal religion in the churches of God. This makes the world's redemption linger. Christian brother! we desire that you should think on this position till it not only gains the assent of your mind, but the deep and practical persuasion of your heart.

We repeat the position—and it challenges prayerful reflection from all “who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity”—that the chief reason why so small a proportion of our fallen race has been reclaimed to Christ is not because our Saviour and His gospel are not perfect, not from the want of a purer version of the Scriptures ; nor so much from the want of a purer theology ; nor so much from lack of more and better preachers ; nor so much from the want of a more extensive circulation of the Scriptures, and other good books ; nor so much from the want of more colleges and theological schools. It is certain that a deficiency in these most important instrumentalities operates most extensively against the cause of Christ ; but the grand *evil that lies back of and gives rise to most of the difficulties in the way of the world's redemp*



**I at once disappear.**



## CHAPTER II.

## THE PREVALENT DEFECTS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER—AND HOW THESE DEFECTS OPERATE AGAINST THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.



ON opening the New Testament, one of the first things that rivets the attention of the careful reader, is the beauty and perfection of the Christian character, as sketched by Christ and His apostles. Read the Sermon on the Mount; turn then to the sixth, eighth, and twelfth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans; ponder then the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians; then study the third chapters of the Epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians; with the addresses of our risen Lord to the seven churches of Asia; in fine, read all the Scriptures. Here you will find religion as it is, and as it should be. Upon the pages of God's book the Christian character shines forth in all its unearthly beauty. Look at religion as it was displayed by the first Christians. True, they had *some imperfections*; but these imperfections we



... religion. Now, the precepts  
tures, and the example of the first  
and, above all, the example of Christ  
the infallible standard and touch-  
lands and ages. In reality, and in  
tion of Heaven and of earth, we are  
just in proportion as we conform to them.  
But who is not struck with the contrast  
the religion of Christ, as it is revealed in  
tures, and as it appears in the lives of  
professors? Study religion as it is in the  
standard, and as it appears in actual  
you will be pained and astonished at the  
similarity. Are they one and the same?  
immensely and distressingly short of  
of professing Christians come of this  
model!



with the inspired standard, is defective—in other words, the prevalent defects in practical religion.

We say in general, that the common type of Christian character *is greatly wanting in personal holiness*. Our religion on record is a holy religion. It wages a war against all sin, great and small. It has no mantle to inwrap a small or fashionable sin under the guise of an infirmity. The Scriptures hold up sin's malignant features in the sunlight of eternal truth, and for our illustration of its fruits, point to a blasted earth and a burning hell.

Take a few of the precepts of our religion as it is in the oracles of God: "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Finally, brethren, *whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatso-*



these things." And t  
**holiness** was personified in its A  
the holy precepts of the law em  
a bright model of all His peopl  
and shew. His manner of life c  
that is wrong, whether of defect c  
did no sin ; neither was guile found  
" He was holy, harmless, undefiled  
from sinners." He re-entered he  
**moral** character as pure as it was w  
into the world.

Now, how far short do the mass  
Christians fall, of exemplifying th  
and of copying Christ, their great n  
unscriptural and un-Christlike are l  
name the name of Christ ! What  
ference, in point of puritie



indulgent, as covetous and selfish as the great crowd who make no pretension to religion.

How lax are some in the observance of the Sabbath ! How engrossed others in the pursuit of gain ! How cunning and overreaching others in all their pecuniary transactions ! How unfeeling and uncharitable others toward the poor ! How passionate and cruel others in the management of their servants ! How freely and incautiously do others touch the wine-cup ! How revengeful and malicious others toward those who have wronged them ! How haughty others in their bearing toward inferiors ! How stinted and illiberal others in their contributions to spread the gospel ! How unfrequent others in their attendance at the house of God ! O shame, where is thy blush ? “ They are the worse for mending, and are washed to a fouler stain.” “ Tell it not in Gath ; publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice ; lest the daughters of the Philistines triumph.” Here is the cause of our failure. This unholiness in the ranks of Zion accounts for our want of success with both God and man. This vast amount of irreligion in the churches has grieved the Spirit, in whom is all our efficiency, and repelled and prejudiced mankind. This is the grand cause of the unbelief and infidelity around us. Men being, from the



... cannot  
whether there be anything real i  
or not—that they must be as safe  
those whose profession so flatly cor  
lives. So long as our churches h  
scriptural members, sinners, thro  
tribes and gradations, will not only  
culty in rejecting the gospel, but v  
curl the lip, and, pointing to such pr  
“And what do ye more than others

Now, this will never do. Throug  
churches there must be a radical i  
in holiness, or the mighty restraints  
pouring of the Spirit, and the stum  
in the way of the world's conversio  
be removed. Habitual sinning mu  
doned. We shall never impress the



## *IN THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER. 27*

religion required of us in the Scriptures, and displayed by Christ, is a steady, uniform, life-long habit. The command is, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, *always abounding* in the work of the Lord." To fickle Reuben God said, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

All good results in nature are effected by agencies that are ceaseless and uniform. Destruction is the work of influences that are capricious and sudden. A crop may in a moment be destroyed by a storm, but it cannot be raised unless the laws of vegetation operate regularly, and the sun shines on steadily from spring till autumn. What would be the effect on the natural world if the sun, moon, and stars should suddenly cease to shine in midsummer?

Not more hurtful would such capriciousness in the lights of the heavens be to the physical world than is unsteadiness in Christians, the moral lights to the moral world. Many of them are half-hearted, transient, and periodical in their religion. Chameleon-like, they take a hue from every new condition they are placed in. They change with the times, vary with circumstances, and always conform to the company they are in. With the worldly they are worldly, *and with the pious they are saints. When this class are in revivals and under afflictions, the*



on them. Like periodical streams, they flow abundantly during the rains, and dry up in the summer. They are all life and zeal in propitious seasons, but in stupid seasons they are as dead as the rocks. As consistent as if they had never known the meteors that blaze on the world, they then become extinguished, leaving no light to be visible. Christians of this type are like a comet religious under some visitation of heaven. In the light of their example, the world is like a comet glittering on the mantle of heaven. When then disappearing, they make a run well for a while, and then stop. Hoping one religious trait after another, they become undistinguishably blended in the great crowd that move on to perdition. This is the usage of an old writer. "They are



honest inquirer. Impulsiveness and irregularity of conduct weaken the strength of the Christian character, and impair the confidence of others in religion in this way. While Christians are firm, walking worthy of their calling, mankind look on and begin to think that they are in earnest, and that religion is true ; but anon they grow remiss, their zeal is cool, they begin the service of another master : the world sees it, distrust is awakened, and they are confirmed in their unbelief.

Now, for the sake of God's honour and the world's good, this defect should at once be corrected. Every lover of Christ and the souls of men should determine to be thoroughly and permanently religious. To convert those without, Christians must be like the streams flowing from perpetual fountains, which, though increased by the rains and diminished by the droughts, yet flow on continually, with sparkling beauty and increasing fertility ; or like the fixed stars, which, though sometimes obscured by the clouds, yet shine on from the dome of the moral heavens with unabated brilliancy on benighted man. Just let Christ's disciples be uniformly as well as really pious, and they will both illuminate and melt the world. They will then, in more senses than one, be the world's only hope.

*Another defect in the religion of most profe*



"But seek first the kingdom  
 righteousness; and all these  
 added unto you:" viz., make  
 my kingdom, and your interest  
 order of importance, and first is  
 David speaks of godliness as his  
 "*One thing* have I desired of the  
 I seek after, that I may dwell in  
 the Lord all the days of my life, to be  
 of the Lord, and to inquire into  
 Says Paul, "This *one thing* I do  
 things which are behind, and reach  
 those things which are before, I press  
 mark." Paul did many things, but  
 a oneness of design. So of all the  
 apostle's disciples. Their religion



And from the very nature of the case, if the religion of Christ be anything, it must be everything ; if it be of any importance at all, it is of all importance. Man's chief end is not to buy, sell, and get gain, and then go and sleep an everlasting sleep in the grave ; but it is to live that he may do good, and find an admission into Paradise when he dies. Everything else pales into insignificance in comparison with this. This is the religion of the Bible, and it is as reasonable as it is scriptural.

But how many, in this day, make the religion of Christ their "all and in all?" It is our painful conviction that many modern professors reverse the divine order, and sink their religion into an affair of subordinate importance. The language of their lives is that they prefer many worldly objects to the favour and honour of Christ. What hundreds of Christ's avowed friends, in the tenor of their lives, make the interests of the soul and eternity give place to the body and time ! Practically the concerns of earth and of self have assumed the place of heaven and of God. Their profession and creed to the contrary, notwithstanding, that is first with them which should be last, and that last which should be first ; that is uppermost which should be *undermost*, and that *undermost* which should be *uppermost*. Are we doing the present ra



nd them, the conversion of souls,  
notion of revivals, secondary to th  
l concerns? Do they not habitually  
former, while they evince all zeal in  
on of the latter? They say by their  
ving,—and some of them seem dete  
r to unsay it,—our farms, our merc  
engross our every care; we will  
business, buy and sell, and get gai  
ures, riches, and honours, we will go  
evoke our baptismal vow, and open  
ids afresh.

ch professors impede the march o  
y more than all her outward fo  
el can injure the cause of Zion as  
professor who shews a deeper cor  
affairs of the world than he does  
s of Christ's kingdom. Who, in  
of Christ's enemies, does as much?



Hume's Essay on Miracles has been regarded as the most formidable and dangerous attack that has been made on Christianity ; yet it was so clearly answered by Campbell and others, that truth was greatly the gainer by the assault. The life, however, of a professor who is supremely engrossed in the things of time, is an argument against our religion that is, of all others, the most difficult to answer. The truth is, that pride, covetousness, sloth, and self-indulgence in such, is an argument against Christianity which, as far as it goes, cannot be answered. Over the Carlyles, the Strausses, the Humboldts, and the Parkers, we will soon triumph with increased power. We laugh all such enemies to scorn. But we do dread worldly professors. They strike us dumb. They are Satan's best allies in our own camp. Hence it is our solemn conviction, that unless they can be induced to tear the world from their heart, rend the veil from their eyes, and make the religion of Christ their pre-eminent business on earth, it will be better for all concerned that they should have their names stricken out of the church register, and lay off the sacred badge of their profession.

This glaring defect in our Christian characters must be corrected ; we must return to the first *principles of the gospel*, or disappointment and defeat will await all our efforts to convert the world.



...the Christian  
of one book, one idea, is  
Let us, then, in reality and  
the salvation of our own souls  
others, the great mission of  
act on the principle that if ei  
be neglected, it shall be those  
of time ; not those of the soul  
Let them impress the world that  
thing else subservient to getting  
good ; that they are determined  
to reach heaven, and attend to  
way.

Then the sun blazing in mid  
be more evidential that there is  
than will be the example of suc  
there is a God of grace.

*A want of affectionateness is  
the mass of Christians. "Christ  
Christ was*



## V THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER. 35

our sins." On the countenance of the dying viour there was one expression stronger than the dying agony itself: it was calm, meek, unquered love; and when He came back from the sepulchre, love prompted Him to send the redemption He had just achieved, first to His murderers; love induced Him to commission His apostles to carry the tidings of that redemption to all the world; love controls all His movements in the wide range of His mediatorial government, and leads Him to seek through all, and in all, the salvation of the world. The same dying compassion for the unsaved, was, in a great measure, possessed and manifested by the apostles. What intense, world-wide compassion all lives in their sermons, prayers, and epistles! They moved the world because they wore as a tablet on their brow the compassion of the Cross. What is the religion of the New Testament? It is supreme love to God and man. Without it, "though we speak with the tongues of men and of angels, though we have the gift of prophecy, understand all mystery, and all knowledge; and though we have all faith, so that we could remove mountains; though we bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and give our bodies to be burned, and have not love, we are nothing." This is the religion that Christ and His apostles taught and exemplified, and the religion that



^  
fessors of this day ! How far short  
of exemplifying the thirteenth c  
First Epistle to the Corinthians !  
therly toward each other, and ho  
d, and repelling toward mankind arou  
at acrimony between those who  
amon Saviour ! What uncharital  
ir mutual bearing toward each ot  
istry ! What feud, strife, and evil  
the churches ! How unkind memb  
mber ; and then what virulence be  
ious sects ! The jealousy and anim  
ich they mutually attack and repel e  
en, has scarcely a parallel with  
fess no fellowship with Christ.  
e the world may now say of the d



## *IN THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER. 37*

earnestness and enthusiasm may be tolerated in everything else but in religion.

Now, piety of this cold, stereotyped grade is as powerless as it is unscriptural. The physical world might at once be flooded by all the light of the sun, moon, and stars, and yet, in the absence of that mysterious vital warmth which accompanies their rays at certain seasons, the earth would remain one vast scene of wintry desolation. So with the case in hand; not all the light streaming from the Scriptures, good books, and an eloquent ministry, will ever melt the wintry depravity of man without the glowing warmth of Christian love. In order to their being converted, mankind do not so much need information as they need persuasion; but nothing persuades so mightily as love. When compassion for souls has been inspired by the cross, kindled by the Spirit, fed by secret prayer, and then breathes from the lips, and beams from the eyes, it melts and wins man's heart when nothing else could move him.

The type of religion, then, that we need, must combine and display a due proportion of warmth as well as heat. All Christians who have made their mark on the world have had compassionate hearts and affectionate manners. Said a man once to one of Whitefield's friends, "How is it that your Whitefield has set the world all on



en from the parable of the prodigal :  
s tears fell faster than he could w  
vay." It is not learning, logic, and  
at form the key to the human soul,  
is just here hundreds of ministers a  
every Sabbath, thousands of sermon:  
gically, rhetorically, and theologically  
l with pointless insipidity, because w:  
: mighty element of love. Many r  
o are commonplace and powerless, w  
ghty under God in pulling down stro:  
ney spoke the truth in love. The gre  
he ministry is not more learning, no  
acquirements, but a deeper and inter  
souls, to vitalise their matter and :  
s is true eloquence. No one can  
out it. Nor in the . . .



are shrewd physiognomists. They instinctively read the feelings of our heart in our countenances and intonations of voice, and they are repelled from us, and from our religion, by coldness in our manner as well as by impropriety in our conduct. Oh, for a religion, affectionate, like that which Jesus and His first disciples displayed! Then would Zion's self-inflicted wounds be healed, her beauty be restored, her strength be regained, and everywhere she would find access to all hearts for her Lord.

Another palpable defect in the present type of Christian character, *is the want of a calm, satisfied, cheerful spirit.* The religion of Christ is a joyful religion. The gospel is glad tidings of great joy. Christianity is the most blissful theme in the universe. It did not create sin, woe, and death. Its mission is to remove these evils, and fill earth with gladness, and heaven with shouts of transport. It banishes unhappiness by removing its cause; and then awakens in the soul a positive, pure, ever-augmenting happiness. Mopish and sad Christians there are; but in all the Scriptures we have never read of a melancholy religion. The religion enjoined in the Bible, and that shone so brightly in the example of the primitive Christians, is an *anticipated heaven on earth.*

*"Happy is that people whose God is the*



rejoicing. They were cheerful in  
their pilgrimage. They charmed  
the godless world by their songs and  
walked on to the grave.

But how have modern Christians  
in this respect! Wherefore? Is  
Christianity changed? Its grounds of joy  
are the same, Jesus Christ is the same, the power  
of God is the same, the grace of God is the same,  
the hope of heaven is the same. The  
great falling off in Christianity has  
been in the apprehension of the genius of  
inconsistency of life.

Some professors have long ago  
died and are always sighing and groaning  
as if they were at a funeral. Others pro-  
fess to be living, but in reality are not satisfied



their religion, and hinder the world's conversion. They confirm the prevalent and fatal prejudice, that the religion of Christ is unfavourable to present happiness. They render the religion of their Master unlovely and repulsive in the estimation of the irreligious. The world is repelled by a piety apparently so comfortless and unquiet. There is an immense loss to the cause of Christ, from the fact that so many Christians do not make it clear to them that are about them that they find in the service of God a solid, satisfying good. It is our conviction that the gloom and sourness that have characterised some professing Christians, have been the occasion of thousands rejecting the gospel, and going away to an undone eternity. It may be well questioned whether sullenness and sadness in the disciples of Christ have not done as much harm to the cause of truth as immorality of conduct.

It is high time, then, that such mistaken views of heaven-born Christianity should be corrected. We owe it to deathless souls around us to be satisfied and cheerful Christians. Happiness is the world's great pursuit, and when they shall see Christians evincing that they have found it ; see them serene and collected amid the waves of trouble ; behold them kept tranquil amid earth's *tumults*, and reflecting in their daily walk a peace *that the world cannot give*, then religion will be



Christian brother, repent of thy past  
and the harm you have thereby done,  
O. Has not thy God done enough  
to shame thee out of tears,  
and induce thee to take down  
and commence the transporting song  
Christ atoned for thy sins, and through  
thou hast a hope of forgiveness. Is there  
anything repressing and dispiriting to thee,  
death has been abolished, hell  
and heaven purchased. For thy good  
I am glad that all things shall work together  
for thy weal, He marshals the three great  
nature, providence and grace. Is there  
anything to render thee miserable,  
O, Christian brother ! by thy unhappiness



How fully and urgently do the Scriptures inculcate this virtue as an essential part of the religion of Christ! "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

And then how strikingly was this grace displayed in our Model and Redeemer! Though no other being ever had the same reasons to entertain high opinions of himself, yet no one was ever equally humble. He voluntary chose the humblest life, the humblest associates, the humblest food, the humblest dress, the humblest manners, and died the most humiliating death. Of Himself He said, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

Now, in a good measure these precepts must be exemplified, and this trait in Christ's character imitated by all who would wear Christ's name. Some things are appendages of religion: others enter into and form its core and essence. Such is humility. It is as indispensable to scriptural piety as gold is to a guinea, or roundness is to a ball. Indeed, it is to the other graces what the grass that carpets the field is to the flowers that here and there gem that field. Hence the admonition, "Be ye clothed (or robed) with humility." As Demosthenes said of *action in oratory*, so may we say of this grace,—*It is the first, second, and third thing in religion*



account of their w  
their acquirements, c  
high social position, an  
distinction in the chur  
with pride. How an  
many claiming to be  
How this sin has impai  
beauty, and weakened  
the world adopt Christi  
before them? They kn  
contradict their professio  
Master. In the estimati  
of saint, the most incong  
proud Christian.

Here there must be a rel  
must be humbled. The r  
sition that was in Christ,  
His early saints, must als  
hibited by the disciples -  
...:11



after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." And this feature of His religion Jesus Christ most strikingly exemplified. He preached self-denial, and He sacrificed heaven and Himself for the world. He requires His disciples to be detached from the world; and He "had not where to lay His head." In a word, He preached the cross, and He bore it; and how closely the first Christians trod in the self-denying steps of their Master! Property, reputation, personal ease, and friends they joyfully surrendered for Christ. They counted all things but loss for Him and His salvation. They gave themselves *to* Him who gave Himself *for* them.

Now, there are thousands of modern professors who cannot help knowing that in this essential particular, their manner of living is utterly unlike that of Christ and His primitive followers. The mass of professors live for self-indulgence and self-advancement. They seem determined not to incumber themselves with more religion than will allow them to take the world along with them to heaven.

*The religion that many have costs them nothing. This type of piety is as easy as it is*



...sies of the day,  
religious books as fast as th  
scribing to religious societies  
on Sabbath, and in discuss  
preachers. All this is easy.  
do not now make one singula  
no sacrifice. They entail no ca  
gion is exceedingly convenient.  
comforts for Christ. They have  
soul for the good of Zion. They  
they can conveniently spare. '  
their contributions to the variou  
gospel is less than they expend f  
luxury. They have no realising  
and all they have belong to Chri  
extend not beyond their own int  
selves and their families for  
their off-...



of God, in living unto Christ, and not unto ourselves, then is it not as improper to call self-seekers Christians, as self-murderers? In all God's book has any one ever read of a covetous, self-indulgent Christian? Have not the churches been incumbered and weakened long enough with professors, who dream they can go to heaven without paying tribute to our divine King? From such professors the cause of Christ gains nothing, and loses much. They misrepresent the Saviour, mislead their children, discourage their brethren, and harden into hopeless impenitence mankind around them. Alas, this is not the day for self-denying, devoted Christians! It is a day of too much prosperity. Oh, for another great reformation!

Another defect in the common type of religion is *inactivity*. God never intended any servant of His, in any kingdom or rank, to be idle. Jesus Christ, our great model, did not sit down in Jerusalem and require those who needed His salvation to seek Him out and wait His convenience; but with a holy industry He went about doing good. Here, teaching the ignorant; yonder, soothing the sorrowing, pardoning the guilty, and saving the lost. To-day, preaching the Sermon on the Mount, to-morrow, meeting by the *wayside*, and giving sight to a blind Bartimeus; *the next day* restoring mind to a poor maniac,



perseverance that no opposition could  
and with a singleness of purpose  
men nor devils could frustrate or dis-  
continued to preach, pray, and travel  
the depraved, to deliver the oppressed  
the down-trodden, and comfort the  
till He finished His work on the  
how closely did the first disciples follow  
ample of their Master in this respect  
day there were no lounging idlers  
yard. Not the apostles only, but proselytes  
tians of both sexes, exerted their power  
and immortal, in carrying out the  
of their ascended Lord. Though in  
executing their Master's work, powerful  
her arm, authority promulgated her  
gotry mustered her hosts, intolerant



ander, Cæsar, and Bonaparte attempted to do in war,—viz., conquer the world. How rightly is one book in the Bible called, not the creed, not the joys, but the “*Acts of the Apostles!*” “*Acts*” so united, self-denying, daring, and persevering, that in a few years they filled the whole Roman empire with the sound of salvation. *Action! action!* for Him that died for us and rose again, was their life-long motto. They were Christians *indeed*. Heaven and earth acknowledged them such. Had the same mind to work been in all subsequent Christians, long before this, the millennium would have dawned on this dark world.

But, alas! most of the Christians that have lived since have been engaged about almost everything else, rather than fulfilling the unrevoked command of their Lord, to exert themselves in conveying the gospel to every creature. It has been nearly eighteen centuries since the first Christians fell asleep, and with here and there some exceptions, there has not been, until of late, anything like systematic, combined *effort* to convert the world to Christ; and even now in this age, peculiarly marked by activity in every department of enterprise, the great majority of Christians in all denominations are *absorbed in other business than that which brought the Son of God into our world, and*



ew that have a mind to work. A few  
ents of the avowed friends of the  
er have committed the hurtful mistake  
ng their religion consist in sound cre  
joyful frames. Their inquiry has be  
, what wilt Thou have us know, hear, n  
, believe, and talk of? not, What wilt T  
us *do*? Now, this deficiency greatly les  
power of the Christian character.  
or personal exertions in the cause of C  
e can be no compensation. To be a  
tament Christian it is not enough to po  
display the passive virtues, such as n  
s, gentleness, patience, and affectionate  
ery Christian is bound, in addition to l  
nd in the faith and consistent in life, *to*  
his mind his voice



enough religion in principle to convert the world speedily, if it were only developed in personal, vigorous, self-denying effort to grow in grace and impart grace. The unbelief of the world will never be overcome until the doctrines of our religion assert themselves in deeds of goodness. The awful verities that men are depraved and exposed to an endless hell,—that Christ died to save them,—that they must repent and believe before they die, or spend their eternity in penal flames, must be exhibited not only in our creeds, sermons, and books, but in ceaseless personal efforts to avert from ourselves and others the doom that awaits the irreligious.

There are Christians enough in the world to place Christianity in the ascendant, if they all would only go out of themselves in efforts to enthrone Christ in the hearts of others. If all were as laborious for Christ as a few have been, in less than a century the entire race would be brought to the knowledge of Christ. If all the visible hosts of Zion would, after the pattern and standard of primitive times, leave the shady recesses of sloth and go abroad in the habitations of men and exert themselves for God and souls, the millennium would at once commence dawning. If some man would rise up and bring about a second great reformation, by which all the friends of Christ could be induced to do what



the vast masses will never  
dark way of perdition. Or  
come incarnated, and take  
or the world will never be im  
its divinity and importance.

Another defect in most C  
*want of symmetry; or, their on*  
tianity, as it shines upon the p  
is a perfect system. And ho  
perfect was religion in the life  
Christ! When you contempl  
of the blessed Redeemer, you s  
lency standing out in undue pr  
character is the loveliness of on  
All beauty, all worth, all exc  
blended and intershaded with t  
more we study His character, t  
impressed with its unity.

But in the present ~



respects they are very irreligious. Grace seems to have been at work on some parts of their nature, but on other parts of it there is seen no signs of its operation. They are better persons as regards some things; but with regard to others, there is no improvement. In some of their connexions they serve God and reflect His truth; but in other relations equally important, they serve another master, and reflect his dark image.

Here is a disciple who seems to be devotional, converses well on the subject of religion, and prays well; but to all around him he is manifestly avaricious. He is so eager to get rich that he will grind the face of the poor. Of him the world scornfully say, He may be a Christian, but he is a very grasping one. Here is a second: he is liberal; he willingly and cheerfully honours the Lord with his substance, but he does his business loosely; often fails to fulfil his word. Of him, the keen-eyed world sarcastically say, He may have piety, but he is not honest. He may render unto God the things that are God's, but he does not render unto man the things that are man's. Here is a third, who is a model of integrity, diligence, and uprightness; but there is one serious blot on his escutcheon: he is proud, obstinate, and self-willed. Of him, his neighbours say, He may be a Christian, but he



railing star, the green-eyed world  
tion, and make the occasion of sin  
in worldly and religious matters  
ingly indolent. Here is another  
relations, is active and persevering  
one hurtful drawback ; he has  
temper, and an ungovernable tongue  
Christian ? say some ; why he is  
household ! Here is another, warm  
and gentle, but there is one cause  
greatly lessens his influence : he  
be light and trifling in his conversation  
deficiency in gravity renders him  
good.

Before leaving the prevalent  
the Christian character, it may be  
out the causes of this disproportion



cupy in the New Testament. Each age, denomination, and preacher, has a favourite theme. Vitally important as the great doctrine of justification by faith alone in the merits of Christ is, it may be well questioned, whether the whole Protestant ministry, in opposing the Popish error of salvation by works, have not depreciated works from the prominence they have in the Scriptures. Which of our standard books on theology exhibit works as fully, as the evidence and development of faith, as they are set forth in the teachings of Christ and His apostles? The effect of such teaching has been that some have been made Antinomians in theory, and thousands in practice. Not that the Reformers of the sixteenth century made too much of justification before God, without the works of the law, but they said too little of justification before men, by works. Paul's method of justification has been all and in all, while that of the Apostle James has been ignored; and hence the bad practical effect on the lives of Protestant Christians. Trinitarians, in their opposition to the Unitarian heresy, have, in effect, dissevered Christ, the atoning Priest, from Christ the exemplar. The New Testament develops Christ's religion as consisting of faith in His atoning death, and imitation of His perfect character. *But how deplorably is the latter feature of Christ*



model? Sabbath after Sabbath our p  
sound with sermons on the cross ; an  
infinitely important. Woe to the worl  
vicarious Calvary ceases to be the centr  
all our preaching and writing. But how  
tively seldom is Christ preached as a  
Now, the counterpart effect of all this  
to make Christians more like Christ  
sentiments and feelings, than in their  
conduct. Some confine their minist  
comforting aspects of the gospel, and  
endency of their preaching has been to r  
people mere insulated pietists ; mere  
epicures, whose only concern is to ex  
selves, and get to heaven when they di  
dwell almost exclusively on the doctri



their estimation, is religion that does not take the form of alms-deeds, and efforts to elevate the poor and down-trodden. Others, again, have their hearts set on the conversion of the heathen. This enterprise so engrosses their thoughts, so fills the field of their vision, that they regard nothing as genuine, practical religion, but exertions for the diffusion of the gospel; and others, again, regard the gospel as a sort of socialising, civilising device, and according to their views, the highest type of Christianity is to battle with, and sweep away social and political evils; though, in so doing, they sweep away their nation's constitution, and tear up the very foundation of society.

Now, all such views of Christ's religion tend greatly to misrepresent and injure it; and they tend to make one-sided, defective Christians.



## CHAPTER III.

SOME OF THE PARTICULARS IN  
RELIGION OF CHRIST MUST BE EX  
ORDER TO EVINCE ITS DIVINITY, A  
MANKIND TO EMBRACE IT.

**N**OTHING is more important  
world in which we live, th  
friends of Christ should b  
and in appearance entire  
To be the salt of the earth and the li  
world, we must be religious in all the  
our characters. The whole man i  
completely transformed that every bel  
the many standpoints around us, ma



due relation and prominence. No one can be spared without impairing the Christian's beauty and lessening his moral power. In the healthy child there is an expansion of all the parts of the body. The arms do not grow while the legs remain stationary. So it is with the scriptural, influential Christian. No duty is neglected, no virtue is cultivated to the omission of other virtues. There is respect to all God's commandments, and every false way is hated.

The type of religion that is now needed does not consist in the belief of a few doctrines and in the performance of a few duties, but in believing the whole gospel, and in the avoidance of all that it forbids, and in doing all that it enjoins. The principles of grace must pervade, subordinate, and vitalise all our thoughts, feelings, words, and deeds. In fine, in all our relations, conditions, connexions, and circumstances, we must act Christianly. Whether on Sabbath or week day—when we are busiest and when we are idlest—whether in society or in solitude—whether we are glad or sad—whether we toil or rest, we must act out the religion of Christ.

Let us, then, specify some of the relations in which our religion must be developed in order to convince and draw men to Christ.

*For the glory of Christ, the good of His people, and the conversion of the world, the church has*



that all who are His friends should that standard. The idea of being friend of Christ is rebuked by all and the plain teaching of the Scrip divine plan is, that we first, by re ward God and faith in Jesus Christ, wardly and essentially religious, and so by becoming a member of the receiving the Lord's Supper. What It is to believe in Jesus Christ with : and then confess Him in His own way.

Our religion is furthermore to ap church by a punctual, prayerful att the ministry of the Word, in meeti saints for prayer, praise, consultatio cipline ; in giving of our substance to gospel at home and abroad—for g much an element of Christ's religion



## *RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 61*

diffuse the gospel in one's own community and through all the world ; in praying for and teaching the rising generation ; and in efforts to convert those who are without.

Now, all this is the gospel in practice in one of our great and most important relations. These church duties and privileges, as far as they go, are the triumphs of the Christian principle in the human life. They are one great phase of the religion that honours Christ and saves the world. A church composed of such members is Christianity, in one of its great designs, in operation. Thus far such a people are witnesses for Christ, impersonations of the truth, and the light of the world.

But membership in the church alters none of the real relations of life. By going into the kingdom of Christ, we do not go out of the world. Our natural relations remain the same ; and it is just as important that we should act Christianly in these relations as it is that we should be Christ-like in the church. Many regard their religion as a sort of a sacred church affair—a robe too fine to be worn in the ordinary transactions of life. They lay it away for Sabbaths, revivals, and ceremonial occasions. When these are over, they merge the Christian into the man of the world. This is a most hurtful and wide-spread mistake. It leaves three-fourths



on that church, but renders himself with the unbelievers around him. comparatively easy to be religious in relations—it is outside of Zion that fight the hardest and most important Christ. To be religious in our ev and business—to be spiritually-mind sistent amid the distractions of a far holy amid the perplexing cares of a f God-fearing amid the fashions, laws customs of those with whom we must to exhibit the light of a religious exa the persecutions to which those who will be subjected—to abide with God ing—to be governed by and display tian principle in all the jostlings and of our pecuniary interests—to be a ?



## RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 63

*family relation. It is the oldest and most useful of all societies. In this relation our faith in Christ must develop itself.* Of all other connexions it is most important that we exhibit religion in this. But faith has not produced its legitimate effect in this far-reaching relation. There is a great deficiency in family religion. The domestic aspect of many a professing character, is unchristianised. Abroad, before the world, on great occasions, there are many whose religious example shines brightly, but at home it flickers into extinction. Many parents, who are valuable members of the church, are positively irreligious in the family sphere; by yielding to little temptations, they destroy their religious influence over those whom God requires them to train for usefulness and heaven. Like the elephant whose skin can resist the force of the musket-ball, but is goaded to madness by the sting of the mosquito, there are many who manifest their religion by resisting great temptations, and bearing great afflictions, and yet allow themselves to be provoked by the ordinary petty trials and difficulties of their family affairs, into habitual irreligion of temper and conduct. They unmurmuringly bury their dead, and willingly do much for the cause of Christ abroad, and yet permit the little inequalities of children and servants to keep them so crabbed



the high points, and leave the ravines  
in vain may such parents teach and  
conversion of their household. Chi  
more likely to practise what their  
than what they say. They are more  
by the eye than by the ear. It w  
initely better for the youth of som  
they saw more religion and heard  
strongly advocate preceptive religio  
but this without the ratification of  
worse than powerless. Without th  
grace of God the children who ar  
with precept, will become hardened  
die in their sins, and in eternity u  
parents for their ruin.

There are thousands of cogent  
urge the exemplification of Christ'  
the family circle. Nowhere else w



## *RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 65*

their natures are so tender, plastic, and imitative, there is a moral certainty that such children will receive religious impressions, deep and ineffaceable. Just as pride, covetousness, ambition, intemperance, and profanity, in parents, poison human nature in its fountain, corrupt the stream of life, and send forward a tide of resistless evil to perdition's stormy lake ; so, on the other hand, religious precept and example, emanating from the same source, will mingle with and transform the elements of youthful nature before they flow into the stream of fixed habits, and thus put in motion a train of religious influences that will be diffused through all time, survive the resurrection trumpet, and augment, through eternity, the number and bliss of the redeemed. Parents, more than any other beings, save God, have the moulding of the materials that are to make the nation and compose the church. To the greatest earthly extent, they have in their hands the destinies of their offspring for both worlds. Their casual words and acts will live on for ever in their effects.

Parents, ponder your every step. You live at the fountains of influence. Your every movement touch chords that vibrate through eternity. With a Christian's name, be irreligious, and the writer would not take your place at the bar of God for ten thousand worlds. The ranks of



— the life of many miserable  
dition doubly sure. But in C  
consistently and strikingly r  
households, and you will make  
last long after the globe shall h  
down by the last conflagration.  
in the virgin soil of your child  
good seed of the kingdom, which  
in heaven, if not before, will pro  
conversion to God, and usefi  
Exemplify before the children  
given you the religion you profes  
fluence will be felt in the prosper  
and glory of your great republic,  
ing the church of Christ with wel  
bers. In fine, the welfare of our  
the church. the gl—



## RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 67

but they must constantly be and appear religious in their manner of living. What parents are and seem to be, will daguerreotype itself deeply in their children.

“ Alas for a thousand fathers whose indulgent sloth  
Hath emptied the vial of confusion o’er a thousand homes ;  
Alas for the palaces and hovels that might have been nurseries of heaven,  
But which worldliness has blighted into schools of hell.  
A kindness most unkind, that hath always spared the rod ;  
A weak and humbling indecision in the mind that should be master ;  
A foolish love, pregnant of hate, that never frown’d on sin ;  
A moral cowardice of heart that never dares command.  
A house where the master ruleth is strong in united subjection,  
And the only commandment with promise, being honour’d,  
is a blessing to that house.  
But if he yieldeth up the reins, it is weak in discordant anarchy,  
And the bonds of love and union melt away as ropes of sand.”

We sustain social as well as family relations. From instinct, and for pleasure and profit, we meet and mingle with each other. *Hence, our religion will be incomplete and uninfluential unless it is developed in the social circle.* Social piety is growing obsolete. From this most important sphere, practical religion is fast being excluded. The public opinion of this refined age is just as effectually banishing practical godliness from the ordinary intercourse of society, as the profession of it was banished from Rome



in your religious observances ; but when you enter the social pale, it requires you to abjure your religious profession : conform to its modes, obey its maxims, speak its language, cultivate its temper, and be the friend and the enemy of its enemies. If you dissent, it will proscribe and exclude you from the social circle, under the charge of enthusiasm ; and if nothing more, it will rebuke you with its tongue ; and just in this world is now, as it ever has been, a religion of expediency, before which many a pious man prostrates and crouches into a silent and slavish conformity, and thereby commits the sin of being false to Christ before men. It requires courage to rise up to the precious singu-



## *RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 69*

posts, and commit the sin of treason against His kingdom. We must take, and maintain the social territory for Christ. Woe to the church and the world, too, if we retreat from it! Unless this great department of life be seasoned with the salt of practical religion, its moral corruption will go on increasing until Christianity will be compelled to abandon ground she has already gained.

Regardless, then, of the reproaches that may be incurred, unappalled by the charges of cant and sanctimoniousness that may be alleged against us, let us bind the scandal of the cross around our brow, and exhibit before the world its unutterable glories. Have not the friends of Christ the same right to exhibit their religion in social society, that the world have to exhibit their irreligion? Who is the more wanting in true politeness and refinement, the man who, in common intercourse, makes no secret of being a disciple of Christ, or the man who makes no secret of being an infidel? Some tell us, that when before the men of the world, our religion should be retiring and unseen. But the whole Bible inculcates openness and publicity in our attachment to Christ. True, Christ rebuked ostentation and hypocrisy, but He enjoins the *manifestation* of love to Him before all men, *under all circumstances, under pain of His dis*



of Christian example should be  
always on the darkness of a low  
immodest in the stars to shine, in  
bloom, and the violet to emit its  
more is it immodest in the obs  
display before men the light of tr  
John, Luther, Hall, Payson, and  
modest men, and gentlemen als  
ligion formed their character ; v  
in them as the sun blazing on  
morning. And, then, what mean  
ing, "Let your light so shine t  
they may see your good works, i  
Father which is in heaven?"  
ashamed of me, and of my wor  
of him shall the Son of man be



ing, by never ascribing to others a bad motive so long as you can impute to them good ones, by discouraging the tattler and tale-bearer, by seeking to heal breaches between neighbours, by discountenancing all unnecessary and dissipating amusements, by meekness, gentleness, kindness, sincerity, simplicity, affectionateness, pureness, and cheerfulness, by giving conversation a religious turn, by speaking of Christ, His kingdom and claims, on all suitable occasions. In this way you will shine as lights in the world—be invested with the mild glories of a heavenly deportment—display the winning sweetness of a holy example, and thereby impress the beholder not only that your religion is an emanation from heaven, but that it is transforming, ennobling, and above all things desirable.

But man sustains business as well as social relations. *Hence our religion must appear also in our secular transactions.* Man was made for society and business, as well as for loving God and praying to Him in secret. True, the most of our religion has to do with God and Christ and ourselves; but much of it regards our fellow-creatures, and cannot be exemplified without intermixture and transactions with them. One prevalent error is regarding religion as *something separate from the common affairs of life.* *Many act on the unscriptural and mischievous*



to do good, are for Sabbaths; but in the secular transactions of life may be laid aside and ignored. Is there a greater moral heresy!

As in the material world there are conflicting laws, so in the moral world are there conflicting duties. All duties are from God, and are in a most important sense religious. God as much commands us to take care of our temporal interests as He does that we should meet on Sabbath. He as much enjoins prudence, and economy, as He enjoins repentance, and faith. He might have ordered matters otherwise. He might have made houses as He creates the trees, and corn and wheat to grow as He does the weeds and tares. He might have rained down food as He did the manna.



## **RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 73**

in spirit" as well as "diligent in business," then it follows that it is His ordinance that His religion and the business of life should be blended; and if so, it moreover follows that there is no incompatibility between the religion of Christ and the avocations of life, for God never requires of His people impossibilities. "As the planets accomplish a twofold and simultaneous revolution—one on their axes and one in their orbits—and all is done in perfect harmony; so the Christian, by having a calling, and abiding with God in that calling, may beautifully and simultaneously revolve around the great centre of God's glory, and the centre of his worldly interests."\* In this way the religion of the Bible may be brought down from that ethereal, angelic region in which it seems to the men of the world to dwell, and assume in the buying, selling, trading, bartering affairs of life a tangible, convincing, winning reality.

But, alas, how irreligious are thousands who wear the name of Christ, in the business aspects of their characters! What selfishness in the management of their pecuniary interests! What violations of the golden rule! Some make promises to meet their dues only to break them. Some take the advantage of the necessities of their neighbours to increase their gains. Others

\* Caird.



... money, never to let  
others, in their efforts after gain, sin  
of overreaching bordering on dishonesty.

Now, who needs be told that in the church  
has been deeply wounded in the hearts of  
friends, and His cause greatly impeded  
with Christians secularly that the  
world have most to do ; and man  
judging Christianity by the inconsistency  
of its friends in this particular, have  
firmed in their prejudices and opposition.  
Perhaps the pecuniary and commercial  
tendency of professing Christians is doing  
retard the spread of the gospel than  
Here is Zion's chief danger. And we  
never do. Our secular transactions  
Christianised, or the church will never  
her mission. Until the friends of the  
put away all wrong-doing in their busi-



## *RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 75*

tians can be induced to regulate, subordinate, and control their secular interests more by gospel principles, they can never extensively and effectually spread the empire of their Lord. This blot on our escutcheon is one of the causes of our comparative defeat. Let the redeemed, for the sake of Christ's honour and the world's salvation, wipe it off. Let each one in God's strength determine that the Christian shall appear in the man of business. Evince your religion by not only keeping within the precincts of legal obligation, but by avoiding every petty unfairness, and by exemplifying whatsoever things are honest and honourable. We earnestly plead for a reformation in this direction. Let the pure religion of the cross be acted out in this great department of life ; let all the men of business take God's Word for their guide and God's glory for their aim ; in all their matters of work and trade, let the farmer, mechanic, the merchant, the buyer, the seller, bring to bear on their avocations the high sanctions of Christianity, and not only will they transmute all their duties, their toils, their losses and gains into the service of God ; but they will do more in impressing those with whom they have to do with the truth and importance of religion, than they *could do by all their prayers, tears, and admonitions.*



*their faith must develop itself  
them.* All of earth's inhabitants  
According to the teachings of  
furthest off, are our neighbors  
has a claim on every other  
posed on us an obligation that  
cel; to impart to all, and to do  
we can. Not to do good to others  
tion of the ulterior end of our  
the same principle as the belief  
of his conversion was made the  
greatest of all blessings, he became  
the most pressing and tender  
to be the medium of those blessings  
It is just as much the duty of  
diffuse the gospel, as it was to  
last great command of Christ  
duty and high privilege of each  
individual.



## ***RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 77***

Christ, misses the great end of his redemption. This is a great standing law of the new dispensation, that can neither be revoked nor evaded.

This position being admitted, then it follows that the missionary enterprise is not a modern conception engrafted on the religion of Christ, but is as much one of the genuine forms and developments of faith in Christ, as baptism, prayer, and brotherly love. Christ was the great model Missionary; the apostles were missionaries; all the members of the primitive churches were missionaries; the gospel itself is as diffusive as the light of heaven; and this spirit, Christians, in this day, must possess, or they are less than the least of all saints, in more senses than one. You cannot define New-Testament religion, without including, as one of its essential elements, the missionary spirit.

Or look at the matter in another light. The whole heathen world are still unconverted. At home, tens of thousands are in the deepest ignorance, and are the slaves of the vilest sins. Each succeeding wave of time bears off millions of the unredeemed to the everlasting damnation of hell. Christians have the gospel, the only remedy for this appalling evil. The church is the only agent in the universe for conveying to the *unsaved the gospel*, and converting them to Christ. *Her opportunities for doing so are many and*



the true sense of the true  
efforts, and self-denial  
amid such circumstances  
religion more than a  
posedly and sees souls  
by thousands a day,  
hands to arrest the  
is high time that Christ  
stood and acted out  
home will never be  
addition to their faith,  
self-denying exertions  
Christ. "A Christian  
man," and a Christ-like  
est style of Christian  
symmetrical embodiment  
ciple, the nearest redupli  
acter in our midst, is the  
to his personal holiness,



But there is one relation we sustain that is more *vital and-responsible than all others. It is to God.* He is the source, and must be the object of our religion. God in Christ must be in reality and in appearance "all and in all" in our religion. If we act out our faith in every earthly relation, and fail in the one we sustain to God, we are only moral, and not pious. The great bifold command, which is the sum of all Bible religion, consists not only in loving our neighbour as ourselves, but in loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our souls, and all our minds; and this love must manifest itself in every part of our life and religion. Our faith must develop itself in maintaining communion with God through the mediation of His Son; in realising His presence and secretly imploring His mercy, and then our supreme regard for Him must be as manifest as the sun in mid-heaven. Has He revealed to us His Word? Let our faith in that Word and in its Author appear by studying it and recommending it to others. Has He given His Son to die for us? Let our love and gratitude to Him for His unspeakable gift appear by unconditionally embracing His Son in all His offices, and in confessing Him before men. Has He a cause in the world? Let us evince our supreme love for God by being the avowed, unflinching friends



our faith impel us to rise up against  
evil-doers, and to stand up for Him  
workers of iniquity." Is it the glory  
dier to defend his country when it  
and shall not the soldier of the cross  
battle, and strike for the Lord of  
His honour is impugned and the  
defiance is waved before His throne  
given you a family? Let your faith  
love for Him be evidenced to all ar  
teaching your domestics God's trut  
ing with them morning and nigh  
household, live, pray, and teach for  
these words, which I command th  
shall be in thine heart: and thou  
them diligently unto thy children, a  
of them when thou sittest in thin  
when thou walkest by the way, an  
liest down. and when thou risest up



**grief, and saying, when your dearest hopes are crushed, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." This is a nobler development of faith in God than going to a martyr's stake or speaking with the tongue of an angel. Does He send bodily afflictions on you? Shew faith in God's power to comfort and sustain, by being patient, serene, and unmurmuring. What eloquent witnesses such are for God! How they glorify Him in the fires! What a testimony do they bear to the power of His grace and the comforts of His Spirit! The inference the beholder must draw when he sees this tangible evidence that God can sustain His people when earthly supports give way, and refresh them when creature consolation is dried up, is that the religion of God is beyond all doubt infinitely important, and ought to be embraced. When I have turned away from such a submissive sufferer, I have said, I have read the religion of Christ in the New Testament; I have preached it; but I have now seen it unmistakably verified. And I have felt like saying to every unbeliever, Come, see how God sustains His people in time of trial, and doubt if you can. It is, moreover, our duty to bear testimony for God in our manner of dying as well as in our manner of living. It is the last time we can do anything for God's glory**



can do. Many suppose

by the dying looks and words of the  
had been proof against all the other  
of grace. The evidence that such  
nishes for the divinity of Christi-  
angible and plain to be denied, and  
to be ridiculed. Such a death for  
holder to conclude that the Master  
thus comfort, encourage, and support  
amid the agonies of death, ought  
and served—that the religion that  
in the trying hour of nature's distress  
serenity, resignation, and triumph  
every principle of self-love and grati-  
embraced. So live, then, that in  
religion may thus bring glory to  
good to your friends.

Now, the man who in all his  
worldly duties, in all his plans ;



lations, and owe duties to the church, to our families, to the world, socially, pecuniarily, politically, and religiously, and primarily to God, as our Creator, Judge, and Redeemer; in all of which the religious principle must develop and discover itself. But we sustain relations and owe duties to ourselves; and hence our religion will be incomplete and inefficacious, *unless we cherish anxieties, and put forth efforts to save our own souls.* Piety in every other respect will not compensate for the want of it in this. Discharging our duties to all others in all respects will not make amends for the neglect of our own soul's mighty interests. We are to love our neighbour *as*, but not *more* than ourselves. In this day of effort for the diffusion of Christianity, we have declined in personal religion. Our gospel has lost, perhaps, as much at home as it has gained abroad. But our religion cannot gain and maintain breadth without depth. The only way by which the gospel can save the race, is by commencing with the individual heart and character, and working outward. We cannot, upon the whole, do much in converting the world, without, at the same time, giving all diligence to make our own calling and election sure. The most effectual method of building up the wall around our Jerusalem, is to build it up before our own door. The only way to make



passions, prayers, and co-  
and there is another sen-  
in which the world's co-  
anxieties, prayers, watch  
own behalf. In other w-  
own admission into he-  
being individually and th-  
all the appliances for  
world back to God, dep-  
piety. The individual, is  
his tempers, words, indul-  
sanctified and controlled  
grace, or the door of heav-  
sinner's heart will be barr-  
religion that saves us, and  
must not be an ecclesiasti-  
a social, but a personal tr-  
individual and his God.  
anything else compensat-



## **RELIGION MUST BE EXHIBITED. 85**

united us to Christ, and changed our natures, must then regulate our every employment, sanctify our every connexion, give tone to our every duty, and direction to our every action. It must give form and power to all man is, says, and does. The religion that saves beyond the grave, and of which the world stands in crying need, is that inward transforming principle that regulates the parent in his family, the master with his servant, the merchant in his warehouse, the lawyer in his office, the physician by the sick-bed, the sailor on the deck, and the soldier in the battle-field.

This is the religion of the New Testament. In the hour of your conversion, you put on the snow-white robe of Christianity. Lay it not off when you leave the house of God on Sabbath. All seamless and shining with heavenly beauty, let it invest you while in the family circle. Clad in it as your glory and your hope, mingle in society. Keep it on, and keep it unspotted from the world in all your secular and civil transactions. Your own vows, the glory of God, and the salvation of the world, require you to live thus. "*Keep thyself pure,*" and thou wilt not live in vain.



## CHAPTER IV

### HOW EXEMPLIFIED RELIGION CONVERSION OF MAN



*T catches their attention* thing, mankind are facts, not by theories. men see and meet with they are impressed, rather than hear and read. Now, the incarnation, resurrection, ascension, and dominion is Christianity in theory. True, these are the most affecting and interesting subjects ; yet to man, buried in time and sense, they are not only to a great degree estimated as



which the mass of this godless race think but little, and care less.

Now, the first step in awakening the irreligious, is to interest and impress them with the truths of the gospel. This, from the nature of the mind, cannot be done till they are induced to attend to, and think on these things. Much is done toward the sinner's conversion when his attention is enlisted to the subject of Christianity. When he is inspired with thoughtfulness, angels gaze on him as hopeful. When from any cause there has been awakened in him a spirit of inquiry, there is a strong probability of his being won to Christ. Here then arises a question as momentous as the soul's value! How can the attention of men be most effectually drawn to the great subject of Christianity? If there can be no sound conversion to God without thought and investigation, how can men be induced to entertain the gospel proposition? The most effectual way to enlist general attention to the religion of Christ, is for its professors to display it in their tempers and conduct. The unconverted can and do allow the Scriptures of God to remain in their possession, unread, and uncared for; but they cannot, without closing their eyes, avoid reading, thinking of, and being *impressed* by the truth, when it shines out in the *life and character of the Christians with whom*



than one thoroughly religious man believes in Jesus Christ, and acts as if it were a great light which those who are more afraid of seeing, and being in the light, can avoid seeing the nature of things impressed by it. A Christian! God impersonated, living and acting in the lives of men in deeds of goodness. A living reduplication of Christ. In his love and compassion throbs afresh. He is representative to a lost world; he shows the way of God. What are all the products of science, and the scenes of nature, but the work of a man who is Christ-like? What a man, and sages, to the Bible, to the matter where such a man lives, to be observed of all observers. No man will be so much scanned, studied



religious example, will be to his neighbours a remembrancer of Christ and eternity. Evil-doers find far less difficulty in forgetting and neglecting the truth as it is preached and taught in the Scriptures, than when they see it lived by good men. Just as a light in a dark night will be seen by many, far and wide ; so a religious man is a moral light in this dark world, that must catch the eye of men.

*It convinces the judgment.* Many are kept from embracing Christ's religion by a lurking scepticism. Some book long since read, a conversation long since had with some infidel friend, or some train of thought has produced in their minds a secret doubt as to the truth of the whole or some of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. These doubts they have found neither time nor inclination to remove ; and, indeed, it may be well questioned whether all irreligious persons are not more or less kept from Christ by a lingering scepticism. With some it is the result of thought ; with others it is the result of thoughtlessness. No matter whence these doubts originate, they must be removed before there can be conversion to Christ.

Now, for the truth of our holy religion there are many independent, powerful, and convincing arguments. But which, after all, is the most unanswerable and effectual argument in favour of



tion? Is it the wonders of Calvary? Is it the unearthly doctrines, and beauty of its precepts, spread at first, within a few miles of the Jordan to the Thames, and is now read in more than two hundred languages on every part of the earth? No: these though in themselves powerful, are not our mightiest proofs. Their force can be evaded. Their record them may never be read; their proclamation may never be heard; they may be read and heard, and their force evaded by sophistry, diversion, and dissimulation. Our crowning evidence is the Christian's practical personal religion after the apostle's pattern. An intelligent and accomplished man, on his death-bed, once testified to his friends that he had never



over. The remembrance of it would come to him in his mirth and disquiet him ; and it was finally the means of his being brought to the belief of Christianity, and to a timely and happy repentance. The writer once asked an intelligent gentleman who was relating his experience in order to membership in the church, what had been the means of his awakening. He replied that the example and prayers of his wife had, under God, more effect in bringing him to Christ than all the sermons he had ever heard.

A conversion from depravity and actual transgression to active godliness, is a sublimer miracle and a more efficacious proof for the divinity of the gospel than was the resurrection of Lazarus. A life of growing likeness to Christ is both a prophecy and the fulfilment of all prophecy. Of all modes of inculcating Christianity, exemplifying it is the best. The best commentary on the Bible the world has ever seen is a holy life. The most eloquent sermon in behalf of the gospel that the world has ever heard, is a uniform, active piety. The best version of the written truth that has ever been made is a consistent religious example. The Christian whose light thus shines, not only correctly renders, but beautifies the sacred text. His life and conduct is a sort of second edition of the written Scriptures—a living epistle that all can read, all



as to the truth and importance of religion. Then the gospel will achieve saving triumphs over the minds, the wills and the hearts of men. Then we can challenge the scoffers and infidels, Come, see our reason and refute them if you can. Behold the disciples of Christ are in proof of their faith ! how patient under wrongs ! how forgiving under injuries ! how patient under sufferings ! how submissive under losses ! how kind to the weak ! how calm and gentle when the storm of passions rage in the bosoms of the wicked ! how useful in life ! how triumphant in death ! doubt if you can. Infidels have seen the Scriptures and the creeds of the Church, but there is no such thing as genuine



reason, justify their unbelief? Have they any logic rigid enough to resist such a plea for Christ and His gospel? The eloquence of our books and sermons we know they can withstand, but can they, without being more than ordinarily depraved, turn aside the living, breathing, beaming, tender argument of a religious life, especially when displayed by those to whom they are bound by near relationships? If many bright religious examples do not shame them out of their infidelity, and shame it back to the bottomless pit, then do they love darkness rather than light ; for the plea of a holy life shuts them up to the alternative either of closing their eyes to the light, or of seeing it and being illuminated by it.

But practical religion will appear in a stronger light as an argument, if we observe how comparatively inefficient the other appliances of salvation are without it. We may translate and put in the hands of every individual a pure version of the Scriptures. We may erect fine houses of worship, and fill every pulpit with a well-trained, eloquent minister. We may supply every family with good books, tracts, and periodicals. We may indoctrinate our membership till they know and believe all the truth. We *may extend to all our religious societies all needful patronage* : and yet, as vastly important



so long as those infidels are ac-  
professing Christians whose liv-  
their profession. The inconsisten-  
will neutralise all the arguments  
may read or hear in favour of Chr-  
convince the gainsayers in his con-  
minister may preach logical, eloqu-  
but if the membership of that min-  
are in the habit of violating the Sa-  
ing the wine cup, and patronising  
ments, they will render their past  
powerless with those gainsayers.  
vain the claims of Christ on that ma-  
who has had dealings with church-n-  
are regardless of their promises &  
claims of others. How improbab-  
version of that young man whos  
mother and sister are as proud, ple-



children who see in their professing parents the same pride and worldliness they see in others !

Woe to the world if all the professed friends of Christ were Christians of this grade. So far as the honour of Christ, and the good of the world are concerned, better that they had never been born ; or being born, had never assumed Christ's name. Of all arguments against Christianity, their lives are the most formidable. They strike Christ's ministers dumb. They wound and discourage the good, and provoke the ridicule and scorn of the bad. They justify and harden the wicked in their iniquity. The destruction of souls will, on the day of eternity, lie at their door. They hinder the world's conversion more than all Christ's outward foes.

Now, let all such misnamed Christians be called to repentance, and rise up to that standard of godliness that the Bible and the world's wants demand ; or, if they will not put away their idols and reform, it will be best for all concerned, that they be excluded from our churches. Let the time come when Christians shall everywhere act out the principles of the gospel ; let sceptics live amid neighbours whose religious example shines brightly ; let the rising generation have parents who reflect in their daily walk the image of *Christ* ; let the unbelieving husbands have wives *who, by their meekness, gentleness, prayfulness,*



their conversion. The crown  
the truth of the gospel will t  
the great triumph achieved.

*It not only attracts attent  
judgment, but removes objecti*  
objections raised against the  
are drawn from the inconsis  
fessing Christians. France v  
nation of atheists by the corrup  
church. The leading English  
century avowed that their disl  
ity was caused by the cor  
morality of the established cl  
source, Hume, the Goliath of  
some of his weapons of atta  
knowledge on all hands 1



duct of Christians. To arouse the impenitent to a sense of their danger, we appeal to the Scriptures ; to justify their irreligion, they appeal to the inconsistent lives of Christians. We seek to win them by preaching the pure life, the holy precepts, and the sublime death of Christ, by calling on them to judge the disciple by his Lord ; they resist our appeals by judging the Lord by His followers, and making His religion responsible for the faults of its friends. We reply by pointing to some in the churches who adorn their profession ; they evade us again by referring to some who disgrace theirs. These, like the falling star, fill the entire field of their vision. We aim to convince their minds and move their hearts by arguments drawn from prophecy, miracles, and the progress of the gospel, in reforming nations ; they break the force of our reasoning, and ward off our appeals by calling to mind some church-member who has a name to live, while he is dead.

In vain may we complain of this injustice and unfairness on the part of the world toward the friends of Christ. We cannot drive them from this sheet-anchor excuse ; in vain may we tell them that they magnify our failings into crimes ; that there is neither logic nor justice in holding *Christianity* responsible for the short-comings of some of its professors. From this refuge



their sins? How can we sh  
necessity of taking all the bl  
their irreligion to themselves  
a third mighty vantage-ground  
to Christ? Not (and let all  
it) merely by preaching relig  
religion, nor by arguing relig  
religion, nor by singing nor  
praying religion; *but by ac*  
our faith develop itself in mal  
and harmless, the sons of G  
in the midst of a crooked and  
let our religious principles ta  
denying exertions to do good  
the religion of Christ, in s  
reappear in the lives of its }



FURTHERMORE: PIETY OF A HIGH GRADE NOT ONLY REMOVES OBJECTIONS BUT WINS ESTEEM. The irreligious sometimes *talk* as if they considered zealous Christians over-scrupulous, when they stand upon their principles and refuse to yield a sinful compliance with the spirit and practice of the multitude, when really they *think* no such thing. When they see a Christian truly consistent in his conduct, their hearts are constrained to do him homage; yea, to do homage to the religion he professes. In consistent personal religion there is something so intrinsically lovely and winning that the most wicked profoundly respect and venerate it. Piety of the right type always secures the esteem of men's judgments and consciences, however much, in some of its aspects, it may excite the dislike of their hearts. However far men may, in heart and life, depart from God, their reason and conscience will always condemn their course, and with awe and admiration approve the conduct of those who follow Christ fully. While the hearts of the wicked are averse to the righteous just in proportion as the tempers and conduct of the pious are unlike and rebuke those of the wicked, it is at the same time equally true that the better and nobler part of man's nature will *admire and confide* in the people of Christ just in proportion as they are consistently and scripturally religious.



not? Why had wicked, sceptic  
rather, other things being equal,  
ners for life pious young ladies th  
are not? Why had parents, th  
themselves, rather send their ch  
gious than to irreligious teacher  
unbelievers, in moving to new co  
settle in a community of praying,  
church-going people, than in a  
infidels? Why, in Florida some  
the infuriated Seminoles spare t  
and his family while butchering  
besides? Why, in times of dai  
and death, do the impenitent so r  
presence and prayers of the pious  
make a profession of religion and



your religion? would you win hearts for your Master? ~~then~~ rise up from the dust of self-seeking, and put on the shining garments of salvation. In this way your piety will become converting, because it is attractive.

Personal religion not only removes objections, *but is the most powerful appeal to the consciences of the unbelieving.* The consistently religious man says to the ungodly, more eloquently and urgently than all others, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you. Come, then, with us, and we will do thee good." The example of the godly man is a living, standing memento to all around him of Christ, death, and eternity. His life and character urge on others the religion of his Lord in tones they must hear and understand. Who invite a slumbering world to Christ so pressingly as they who give proof of having gone to Christ themselves? Who teach the world so well how to believe as they who walk by faith? Who inculcate so effectually the great work of repentance as they who hate, sorrow over, and forsake all sin? Who reprove pride like the humble? Who warn men so awfully against going to hell as those who proclaim by their conduct that they have forsaken destruction's broad pathway? Who point out the way to heaven so plainly as those who walk in that way? Who so overwhelmingly



husband as does the religious exalt  
wife. The God of grace has no might  
mentality to bring to bear on deprave  
a holy life. In the personal religi  
people Jesus is personated, and con  
the unbelieving. If the plea of a st  
gious example does not awaken the  
beholder, then he loves darkness r  
light. Most likely the next applianc  
bring to bear on him will be heavy  
God did much for man's salvation in  
His Word to teach him, His Son to  
and His Spirit to sanctify him. He  
further His deep concern for the sinner  
ing and beseeching him through His  
but when He places in their comm



Nor efficiently. That were an invasion of the influence of the Holy Spirit ; but, like the written and preached truth, it converts to Christ instrumentally. God's Spirit must make the truth efficacious in the sinner's conversion, whether it be read, heard, or seen in the conduct of Christians. If in any of our attempts to convert the world we confound the instrumentalities of grace with the grace of instrumentalities, disappointment and defeat await us.

Now, instrumentally considered, some unbelievers are more difficult to convert than others. Some men are both Bible-proof and sermon-proof. This class can only be reached, if reached at all, by Christ-like piety. Thousands on earth, and millions in heaven, have been won to Christ by this means. Such convert because they evidence their conversion. They allure to brighter worlds because they lead the way.

It is easy to see how such Christians save souls from death. In the life of such Christians, the ungodly having before them an end of all controversy as to the reality of the Christian religion ; seeing in persons of like passions, age, occupations with themselves marked proofs of the practicability and desirableness of personal religion ; seeing neighbours humble, meek, forgiving, benevolent, and prayerful, whom they knew once to be proud, vain, revengeful, cover



stances of piety, being forced to  
trast between the character ~~and~~  
such and their own unhappy circu  
these appeals coming to their he  
sciences through tender ties, t  
powerfully drawn away from the  
to Christ the sinner's friend.

Oh, what a mighty motive this to  
to exhibit before the world the  
personal holiness! All cannot b  
reform countries, nor Whitefields  
thousands, nor Judsons to transl  
tures into other tongues ; all are  
they may give to the cause of Ch  
sands, nor learned that they n  
argue for Christ ; all cannot become



the truth is being read from the Bible, and proclaimed from the pulpit, let all the members of our churches second and enforce that truth by the silent eloquence of holy lives, and the world's conversion will move forward at home and abroad with primitive speed. "A nation will be born in a day." Millennial dawn will blush deeper and deeper, the sun of truth will rise on our darkened world, and revivals will roll from land to land, like the waves of the mighty deep. The way to hell will then soon become a dreary waste, and the way to heaven crowded with converts as numerous and as resplendent as the stars that bestud the broad galaxy of the midnight heavens. Come that day! Who would not pray, and live, and labour, for such a glorious state of things?



## CHAPTER V.

### MEANS TO BE USED FOR THE A OF THE PIETY RECOMMEN

**H**AVING pointed out the  
tures of the religion th  
its own truth, and conver  
having seen the particu  
it must appear, and then seen how  
converting mankind ; the question  
How can such a standard of practic  
reached ? Says an objector, suc  
religion is most desirable and imp  
is impracticable for the mass of pi  
refined and difficult for the gene  
friends of Christ ; and many labo



Never did the unbelieving heart frame a more unscriptural objection. Millions of Christians environed with far more difficulties, and far fewer advantages than Christians have now, have more than reached the standard we are here pleading for. If Christians would only arise from their sluggish repose and go about the matter in the right way, they would find it much easier to be whole-hearted Christians, than to work out that difficult problem, how near perdition's edge they can approach, and yet reach the heavenly world. God has promised all needed help. He is willing to grant the Spirit's influences. In Christ, our Master and Model, all fulness dwells. Hence, eminent piety is within the reach of all. The piety of Moses, Daniel, and Paul, is as much our imperative duty as it is our glorious privilege. Let no one pronounce elevated piety impracticable till he has, in God's own prescribed way, made the experiment. But how, it is most pertinent to inquire, can such a type of religion be reached?

*In order to the exhibition of the religion of Christ in our tempers and conduct, there must be implanted in the soul the religious principle. A man must be religious in the sight of God before he can appear so in the sight of man. As in nature, so in grace, no effect can exceed its cause. In religion there are two fundamental*



... religious practice unless it  
ligious principle. A man's  
habitual contradiction to his b  
cannot be made to bear evil fr  
corrupt tree be made to bear g

You may, by pruning off the  
loosening and manuring the  
roots of the stunted, withered t  
and make it fruit-bearing. Bu  
much you may dig about and e  
the dead tree, no matter how pr  
beams and showers may be, it  
The best food and the best nur  
cannot make the dead infant live  
fore, in either case, there can be  
provement, there must exist  
thing we call life. So with th  
Man by nature "is dead in tr  
sin." Before there can be any e



the Holy Ghost, that sublime principle of life which Jesus Christ died to procure, all efforts to form a religious character is but feeding death and cultivating sterility.

Just here thousands are fatally erring. They are attempting to rear a superstructure of practical godliness, without first laying the foundation of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." No observance of the means of grace, no prayers, no self-denial, no efforts, no compliance with divine ordinances, can make a man in reality and in appearance religious, until he has, by faith in the great atonement, "passed from death unto life." It is as unscriptural as it is unphilosophical, to suppose there can be any attainments made in practical religion, until there has been exercised in the person and work of Christ, a penitential faith. In religion a man will go just as far as he believes, and no further. His zeal, holiness, humility, prayerfulness, happiness, and usefulness, will be just in proportion to the strength of his faith.

Why are there so many professors who are dead while they have a name to live? Why are there so many others that reflect so faintly the image of Christ? In fine, why is the religion of the mass of modern Christians so partial, fickle, and indistinct? It is because many have an



Christians, doing no good, and  
as by fire." And then in all  
been eminently and strikingly  
were the primitive Christians.  
ther, Menno, Newton, Fuller  
Chalmers, and a host of others,  
istry and in the laity. Now, w  
shaped, moulded, and directed  
conduct of these men? What  
wonder and the hope of the w  
the secret of their vast superior  
of Christians in practical reli  
quently in point of usefulness?  
educational or domestic or so  
influences made them what th  
attained their eminence in holi



## OF THE PIETY RECOMMENDED. III

ardent love for Christ and souls shaped their characters, and gave them their influence. True ; but what induced them to love Christ and souls so intensely ? Their model characters and power for good, says still another, are attributable to their great spirituality. Very true ; but what imparted to them their spirituality ? The great principle that transformed and ennobled their characters, that impelled them to their mighty achievements for God, was their strong faith in the person, cross, presence, and promise of Jesus Christ. Their faith in God was the first of their graces, and the source of the rest. Their prayerfulness, their diligence, their boldness, their labours of love, were but the embodiment of their faith in their crucified, risen, reigning Lord.

The truth is, not only is faith the great instrumentality by which our relations to God's law and government are adjusted, by which our sins are forgiven and our natures changed, but it is the great inward principle that prompts to holiness of life. And if this be so, then, in order to religious improvement, we must seek an increase of our faith. Let us begin with the cause of the evil. Let us repent of the great sin of unbelief. We must not rest contented while *our convictions of the truth and importance of the gospel are cold and inoperative. We must*



age, but a living, enveloping, presence. We must beg God so to purge from our eye the films and mists of unbelief, that we may discern distinctly and realisingly the reality of the vision. It must grow till it becomes the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Dear reader, covet a strong knowledge of the Lord Jesus more than gold, or famous treasures. Only have faith in Christ, and not in anything else. Your resources must be as exhaustless as God himself. Faith in Christ—this is the all-inclusive germ which involves within it every other grace.

If, then, you would attain Christlikeness, see to it that your faith is of the right kind, and it grows exceedingly. See to it that you are always transacting with Christ



to grow in grace and impart grace, practically ignore the Spirit's personality and agency. It may be well questioned whether our defective and erroneous views of the Spirit's office and work are not the grand cause of our puny piety and inefficiency. Luther accomplished the great Reformation of the sixteenth century by bringing out, explaining, defending, and proclaiming the death of Christ as the only means of the sinner's justification before God. Now, before the church of Christ will ever rise up to that high standard of holiness which the exigencies of the world so imperatively demand, there must be effected a second great reformation in regard to the work of the Spirit. By all means let us maintain and depend on the death of the second person in the Trinity, as the only means of taking away our guilt and securing to us a right and title to heaven. But it is equally as important that we maintain and depend on the agency of the third, to renew our natures and transform us into the likeness of Christ. What Christ did *for* us becomes effectual in our salvation, because it is followed by the Spirit's working *in* us.

What Christ wrought for us was done unsolicited and unasked. Not so with the Spirit. Those who most covet, seek, and prize the helps of this heavenly agent, generally have vouchsafed *unto them the largest measure of His gracious*



the other hand, prayerful  
tempers invite and seek  
agency. So that the great  
Spirit is that we toil, wait  
could make ourselves happy  
time that we depend upon  
Spirit's influences as if all  
on this celestial agent.

The indispensableness and  
sure of the Spirit's influence  
ual growth will appear if you  
of spiritual progress, and  
way. There are very many  
difficulties in the way of re-  
which in our own unaided  
more overcome than we can  
or had the Spirit's influence.



current, and Satan's wiles? Without the Spirit's gracious helps we may become refined, moral, and in one sense know and believe the truth; but without His helps there cannot be created in us and developed through us the principles of grace. No power in the universe, save that of the Holy Ghost, can make a New-Testament Christian. Genuine religion is just as much His workmanship as the physical world. We know this doctrine is liable to misapprehension and abuse; still no truth is more plainly revealed in the Scriptures, and the great requisite in order to become a full-grown, vigorous Christian, is a deep practical persuasion of our dependence on the promised Spirit.

Let all our endeavours after a fuller possession and development of the Christian principle, be put forth with a penetrating conviction of our need of the promptings and leadings of the Spirit. Let us fear grieving Him more than we would fear the frown of all creation. Let us watch and pray against every feeling, word, and act, that would in the least restrain His presence and quench His influences. Let us cultivate the tempers, speak the words, and do the things that will invite and secure His continued indwelling. Should we provoke Him to abandon us, let us search and fast, and pray, and repent, *till He re-enters and fills our bosoms with His*



children, and men -

these times of need. Have you a habit that stunts your spiritual growth and your religious influence? Ask for its removal that you may see the guilt of it; mourn it, and be enabled to forsake it. Are you ignorant? Ask the Father in the name of the Lord for the Spirit, that you may be taught and guided into all truth. Are you weak, and cast down? Secure the presence of the Comforter, and you will be strengthened, and encouraged.

We give it as the result of much thanksgiving in order to a more thorough exemplification of the gospel, we must more distinctly and more firmly believe in, and more eagerly receive an increased measure of the influence of the Holy Ghost.

*In order to religious growth, the*

*presence of the Holy Spirit is necessary.*



Jesus." Of young converts the apostle Peter says, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." It has been said, it matters not what a man believes, or whether he believes anything, so that he does what is right. As well say, it matters not what a man eats, or whether he eat at all, so that he lives. We can no more live and grow spiritually without eating the "living bread that came down from heaven," than we can live and grow bodily without eating wholesome food. Error is just as hurtful to the soul as poison is to the body. Hence no more should that minister be called a bigot, who is greatly anxious that his people should believe only the truth of God, than the physician who, by his pen and tongue, contends for wholesome diet.

But the Scriptures do not necessarily and unconditionally become spiritual nutriment to our souls.

(a.) *They must be read.* An unread Bible is an ambiguous sign of a low state of religion. To suppose that one can make attainments in grace, without a knowledge of God's Word, is to suppose that the end can be reached without the means. Such a supposition depreciates and makes nugatory the word of life.

We suppose, however, most professors read the Scriptures. But few can be found in Protestant



interrupted progress in thought, inattention, irreverence, formality, earnestness, with which the Bible is perused, we say :

(b.) Again, that in order to make the means of our sanctification grow, they must be *read and meditation*. The best and most nutritious food, if not taken into the stomach, without the process of digestion, becomes poisonous. Before it can be incorporated into the animal economy, it must undergo a suitable process. So the truth of God, if it remains in the head, or slumbering in the memory, being "marked, learned, and inwardly repeated," not only contributes nothing to the growth of the soul, but becomes "a snare unto death." During the day the mind wanders hither and thither, and gathers in



nature, into the repository of his memory, the truth of God; and then let him, during the "night watches," like David; or "at eventide," like Isaac; or during a season set apart for the purpose, take that truth and ponder it, pray over it, and thereby convert it into spiritual pabulum for his soul. In this way the great facts and doctrines of the gospel will no longer be dead events in the annals of the past, and dry abstractions for speculations, but will be radiant realities, shaping and controlling the feelings, sentiments, and conduct.

See that eminent saint who stands distinguished in all the country around, for his sanctity, benevolence, and as one who walks with God. He reached this elevation by habitually and seriously pondering sacred things. If you go back into his history for the last twenty years, you would find that those moments that others waste in frivolous thinking and listless vacuity, he employed in heavenly meditation.

In sanctifying through the truth, God works no miracles, violates no law of our mind. It transforms and moulds us into the image of its Author, just in proportion as it impresses us; and it impresses us just in proportion as it is digested. Some Christians are ever reading and hearing the truth, and are none the better for it. Wherefore? Because the truth makes



in moving the eye mechanically over God's Book, without ever meaning. Never will such grow, till this habit is broken. The Scriptures are emphatic on this point. "Behold;" "Take *heed* how you hear what we say, and the Lord giving in all things;" "*Prove* all that which is good." "There give the more earnest *heed* to what we have heard, lest at any time they should slip." "Be not unwise, but what the will of the Lord is." things."

Reader, would you become a proportioned disciple of Christ? Read the gospel till you



nexion between His death and your salvation. Would you become more and more like Christ, and more the admiration and hope of the world? Then consider the doctrines and promises of the gospel till your very soul takes their type and mould, till they are incorporated into the economy of your moral natures. In no other way will you ever grow in grace. You will never become eminent Christians upon easier terms ; and you will grow in the religion of Christ just in proportion as you sincerely pursue this course.

(c.) In order to have the Scriptures become food and principle unto your soul, they *must be studied in prayerful dependence on the Spirit's influences*. The Bible is a revelation from God *unto us* ; before the truth is revealed *into us*, the same Spirit that indited it must take it from the written page and give it a penetrating power. The Bible is all-needed external light ; before it can become the means of spiritual growth unto us, the Spirit must give us internal vision for that light. Without the Spirit's teachings, one may know the Scriptures intellectually, but not savingly. No one ever read and studied himself into a saving knowledge of God's truth. There is a seal to God's Book that nothing but the Holy Ghost can take away. There is a film in the way of a converting, sanctifying view of the truth that nothing but the Holy Ghost can



requisite to a profitable study  
that nothing but the Holy (C)  
It is only when the Spirit  
sacred text, takes it from the  
it into the heart, that we ca  
meaning, be touched by its  
its remonstrances, animated  
take complexion from its r  
tions from its prescriptions.

(d.) The Scriptures must al  
*the profoundest reverence, in*  
*us the fruits of holy living.*  
much a communication from  
seen His hand writing it on t  
vens. It is not Moses, Isa  
Matthew, Luke, John, Paul,



frame, put away all worldly thoughts, and give it in charge to your soul to "hear what God the Lord will speak." Such a state of mind, habitually maintained toward the Word of God, will much conduce to its moulding and transforming the life and character.

(e.) You will not read the Word of God to practical purpose, unless you study it with a profound *teachableness*. One of the great hindrances to the full power of God's truth over the heart and life of believers, is systems previously imbibed from human sources. Vast numbers, among even Protestants, derive their religious opinions from other than the divinely-accredited rule of faith and practice. Some, by their own reason, first determine what God should and what He should not require of His creatures; and then appeal to the Scriptures for confirmation of their self-devised systems. Others read the Bible to judge and try it by the views they inherited from their parents; and then what hundreds approach God's Book preoccupied with and committed to the standards of their churches! Human creeds had been subscribed to before the Bible was opened. If all these creeds, systems, and opinions, were tried by the Scriptures and not the Scriptures by them, then they would not be so productive of mischief. How many books have been written to make the



Scriptures accredit and imports  
not only *unscriptural*, but anti-

Now, such readers not only  
despise the Word of God ; the  
principles which, in their de-  
render the Word of God nei-  
from the nature of the case  
partial believers and doers of  
far different views must we see  
God, to be essentially sanctified  
thereby. To be enlightened  
lively oracles, we must go to the  
but for law ; we must read, and  
to learn and obey. There is no  
ness to conviction, that free-  
and prepossessions that will  
open the Divine Volume to us



book, and chapter after chapter, and verse after verse, comes under review, we will, in prayerful dependence on the Spirit's aid, and human help, if need be, seek to know the will of God, and believe it, love it, and contend for it, however crossing to our own feelings and views, or the feelings and views of the world. Such a reader of the Bible will certainly grow in religion. He takes the very attitude to please God and make full proof of the saving power of His truth.

(f.) To have the truth of God produce in our mind, heart, and life its designed effect, it must be read and heard with *self-application*. The Bible is a message from God to us individually. It isolates every man from every other, and imposes on him the obligation, and then offers him the means and the motives to read, believe, and be holy. It makes religion an individual transaction between its Author and the sinner. Hence it is a solemnly responsible thing to read the Bible. We never close its pages the same moral beings we were when we opened them. We have either been impressed more deeply with its saving type and mould, or its sacred truths have hardened and made us more indifferent. When then we open the Scriptures, there is no time nor scope for amusement or self-complacency. As portion after portion comes under review, the question should be, What bearing has this truth on my



...  
compare myself with and examine  
requisitions, for fear I might be de  
right and title to heaven. Self-de  
gion is most common, most easy, a  
Let me then, as I go through Go  
myself by its truths, lest at the las  
in reply to the query, "Lord, have I  
Thy name? done many things for  
the cutting repulse, "Depart from  
cursed, I never knew you." Nor  
that I guard against delusion. For  
and the world's good, I should "le  
ciples of the doctrine of Christ an  
perfection." This cannot be done  
in the habit of applying the truth  
own business and bosom.

Am I reading of the sufferings of  
me question myself as to whether



toward our Lord Jesus Christ?" Does the subject of baptism come under review? Let me question my soul solemnly whether I am carrying out the great practical design of this ordinance. Do I read a threatening? Let me stop, and with fear and trembling find out whether I am liable to the danger. Anon, do the promises present themselves? Can I claim them? Do I cross reproofs? The question must be settled whether I am censurable. Does the next chapter contain a description of the character and the reward of the righteous? I should deeply ponder whether I am such, that I may claim his reward. In this way the child of grace will not only be a reader and hearer, but "a doer of the truth." Every time he reads the Scriptures in this manner, he will have made advancement in spirituality. In this way the truth becomes to him nutritious, strengthening, transforming principles. In fine, this is one of the secrets of becoming a full-grown New-Testament Christian. Without it the soul will be impoverished and the character defective.

(g.) We say again, in order to bring ourselves fully under the saving effects of the truth of God, *we must study it ourselves, as it is revealed in the oracles of God.* Many, even among Protestants, only study truth second-handed. If they enter the temple of truth at all, it is leaning on



religious opinions —

They are contented only to view  
light it has been placed in by some

Now, such a custom is not only  
able to the cultivation of piety,  
adopt, with the name of Protestantism,  
worst errors of Popery. To receive  
opinions from any uninspired individual,  
matter how learned, wise, and pious,  
without testing them by the Word  
invest that individual with the attribute  
bility. To adopt our religious views  
without searching the Scriptures to  
things are so, is to call that man  
thereby prostrate our intellect and  
the foot of human authority. Much  
is not a doctrine in the Bible about  
men have not entertained diverse  
views. Hence we can have no a



precious gold gleaming near the earth's surface, the way to believe, be holy, and reach heaven, shines on the very face of the Scriptures. A child may see and understand it. Nowhere else is the way of salvation as plain as it is in the divine Scriptures. For practical ends, the Bible is of all religious books the plainest. The man of common sense can understand it in this sense just as well as the learned divine. The expositions that learned men give of the Scriptures are valuable, often, as helps. Light shed upon the sacred text, from whatever source, should be accepted. But let the individual inquirer have the independence to bring them all to the test of "the law and testimony." Let him determine to see with his own eyes. Since he has a mind and God's word is sufficiently plain, let him see to it that no commentary of church, minister, divine, or parent shall be received as oracular any further than *he* perceives they accord with the Scriptures. We hold, that to be Christians in the right sense of that appellation, our creed must be, not what Calvin wrote, Luther said, or our church believes ; not what the best men or most men say, but what God has said.

It is said that Alexander the Great once visited Diogenes the Cynic while he was basking in the sunbeams in his tub. The great monarch was so delighted with the serenity of the philosopher,



have only one favour to ask, and stand aside from between me and whose beams I am now enjoying let the seekers after God's will stand and creed-makers, to the Lutherans the Wesleys and the Fullers, stand between us and the sunbeams. We need not the hand-lamps of men when the bright sun of God's Son is on us.

“To the law and to the testimony; let us seek light. From the law of truth let us derive all our doctrines; let its decisions let us resolve all our doubts; let its standard let us bring and test our opinions by; and by its direction let us shape all our plans and regulate our course with the world. And then, and then, the truth will become un-



activity they grow and glorify Him. The strongest, most robust trees, are those that grow, not in shaded valleys, but on wintry heights, where they are rocked by the storms and scathed by the thunders. Why are the muscles so fully developed in the brawny arm of the blacksmith? Because it is his daily business to ply the huge hammer to the ringing anvil. Suppose a mother should confine her infant to the nursery, never allow it to make an effort to crawl, nor see the light of the sun. Such a child would not only not grow, but become positively unhealthy. How does it learn to crawl, and then to walk? By repeated attempts. In its first attempts it falls, and falls again ; receives wounds, perhaps ; does the mother forbid further attempts? No ; she kisses and caresses it, and encourages it to try again and again, till, to the joy of both parent and child, it can walk without wearying, and run without fainting. Whose limbs are strung with the greatest strength? on whose cheeks does health bloom the ruddiest, and whose spirits are most buoyant and cheerful? Is it the man who chains himself to sedentary habits, always breathes the close atmosphere of the heated room, and lounges perpetually on couches of luxurious ease? No, verily ; but the man who, despite of winter's cold and summer's heat, rises early and passes the day in athletic ex-



shuts himself out from the world, and spends his time in reading and meditation—these are vastly important in their place. But the man who, in imitation of his Master, goes “about doing good.” Perhaps the greatest defect in the piety of other ages is that they pursued salvation too much insulated, selfish concern. Their piety was dreamy, subtle, and abstract. In truth, of these, who have been held up to the paragons of religion, were mere religious rather than Christians after the New Testament pattern. The cloister is not the place for spiritual manhood and vigour. Think of such Christians as Paul, Brainerd, May, Judson, could have been trained in the shady recesses of the closet? No ; as to all Christians of both sexes, that if they attain unto the stature of full-grown



you will, in every possible situation, find work to do for Christ. Do you ask, What can I do? The whole heathen world, nearly, is still unconverted. In your own land and country are tens of thousands sunk in the deepest ignorance, and the slaves of the vilest sins. In your own families are those who are Christless and hopeless. The youth of your community are to be brought into the Sabbath school and trained for the church and heaven. Bibles are to be circulated, tracts distributed, the poor, sick, and dying are to be visited and aided, the burdens of your brethren are to be borne, the ignorant taught, the wicked warned, and the bewildered guided to Christ. You never go about without having it in your power to do something for Christ and souls. There is not a day in the year in which you may not, in some way, spread the empire of Christ.

Now, every effort you make to do good, every exertion you put forth to spread the cause of God, either directly or indirectly, tends to strengthen and develop your own piety. Every time you exercise the gracious affections, you strengthen and spiritualise them. Every prayer you offer up for yourselves and others increases the spirit and confirms the habit of devotion. Every time you trust the promises of God, your faith in God becomes stronger and more influential.



the beneficent, active Christian !  
he is constantly witnessing the  
gospel over men's hearts and liv  
conversion that he instrumenta  
ocular verification of the divinit  
Can he doubt, when God actua  
blesses his efforts to the salva  
Christian ! do understand this m  
in the atoning cross of Christ, fir  
prompts you to good works ; a  
put forth, not only save souls,  
your faith, intensify your love  
your hopes. Upon this princip  
others, we ourselves are refreshe  
efforts to dispel darkness from o  
other lands, scatter clouds from



bers. They censure, they scold, complain, and lecture: they preach on the great facts, doctrines, and promises of the gospel, and still their membership are comfortless, useless, and lukewarm; and why? Mainly because they are idlers in the vineyard of God. Verily, this will never do. The members of our churches must be put to work for Christ, or they will not only not grow in grace, but grow in worldliness till expulsion will be inevitable. Action! action! must be the bannered motto of every church, or its members will remain spiritual dwarfs. Let pastors generally do what the pastors of the German Baptist churches have done. find for each member a post of activity, and keep them at it, and then the needed reformation will commence.

*Another means of spiritual improvement is constant attention to the details of religion.* The world's history shews that all men who have been eminent for success in any department of life, have been men of painstaking detail. How do men ordinarily become wealthy? By prudence and economy in little things. Pounds are gained by saving the pence. How do men become learned? Not by one magic, mental effort, but by toiling on through years, doing a million of little mental drudgeries. What was one of the great secrets of that power by which Napoleon



as to subserve to victory. So v  
Paul, the greatest and most suc  
good that God has ever made.  
plans, and efforts, were world-  
more for the world's conversion  
that has lived ; and yet in all l  
epistles, in all his efforts to sa  
others, there was a ceaseless circu  
tion to every character, every v  
duty. So, too, with the Son o  
earth. The beauty, glory, and  
character consist in His havi  
things occasionally, and attend  
the little incidents and duties of  
Redeemer now and then raised  
out devils, stilled the sea, at the  
most painstaking pastor, never c  
filling up and adorning the sma



laying the foundation in principle, then adding virtue to virtue, adjusting principle to duty, supplying wisdom from experience, till it appears in its maturity.

Now, all this applies with peculiar force to spiritual growth. In piety, advances in general are made by advances in particular. We can only attain religion in the aggregate by acquiring its details. We do not reach spiritual manhood by serving God in great things, on great occasions. We do not become Christ-like by being baptized, attending revivals, resisting great temptations, and performing great duties. The process by which our religious characters improve is the same as that by which they deteriorate, little and by little, step by step. One might as well attempt to read without attending to the combination of letters and the formation of syllables, as to learn the art of holiness without cultivating the individual graces and duties of which holiness consists. "For as words are the result of letters and syllables properly combined, so holiness is but the aggregate of individual graces harmoniously blended." Do you wish your spiritual garden to flourish, bloom with beauty, and yield fruit? Be often in it, rooting up the noxious weeds of sin, and watching and watering the flowers of each grace. Dig about, enrich, prune, prop, and water with



**His word.** Have you declined it? **Rest** not till it is kindled into a thinking of His love to you. Is it not into the habit of reading and hearing of God formally and coldly? Is it not with your conscience till this and Spirit-grieving habit is broken? Is every word of God is read and heard solemnly, and realisingly. Is sin gaining the mastery over your business to strive, watch, and pray? Is sin till it is overcome. Are Christian meekness, gentleness, and patience? Study the character of the Saviour, until in these respects you have imbibed His spirit and copied His example. Do ill feelings find a place in your heart? Be self-accuser and self-reformer.



In fine, by comparing yourself with scriptural precepts and examples, aim to find out all your defects in principle and in practice, and then, in God's strength and for God's glory, make the correction in every case. In this way you will grow, though slowly yet steadily, not disproportionately, but symmetrically and essentially.

By patient effort, make it the business of your life to overcome and abandon individual sins, and to acquire individual graces. "Add to your faith virtue ; and to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity." Now bring your diligence and prayers to bear on the correction of an evil habit ; anon to chasten an evil temper ; then to uproot a false principle and establish a true one. To-day marshal the soul's forces, and implore divine help to meet an affliction with patience ; and to-morrow to bear wrongs with meekness and losses with resignation. Search the Scriptures with care, resist temptations with firmness, enjoy the blessings of life with moderation, examine the heart with scrutiny, and discharge all the little duties of life with diligence, and by so doing you will grow in religion rapidly, harmoniously, and beautifully.



reared, the plant of grace requires  
and watchfulness. Its enemies are  
and the air. Hence he who values  
piety must constantly keep his heart  
open. He must daily look within  
fixedly. He must tread along  
with a cautious step, examining every  
thing by the standard of the Word.  
How are we to overcome the temptations  
of inattention! How vigilant must we be,  
how much haste must we make, how  
careful must we be in all our plans  
and how we must forestall the great enemy of our souls.

The command, "Watch and pray,  
that ye enter not into temptation,"  
is delivered in the gloomy garden



indications of divine providence. When these are observed, they increase one's faith and school him for usefulness and heaven. Watch the heart : " Out of it are the issues of life." As is the heart, so will be the life and conduct. The character is the embodiment of the feelings and sentiments of the heart, be they right or wrong. There can be no growth in grace unless an attentive, scrutinising eye is kept upon the movements of the heart. Hence, watch against evil thoughts ; they, when indulged in, diffuse the chills of death through the soul and can no more comport with spiritual vigour than paralysis can comport with bodily activity. Watch against the risings of pride and ambition. By these angels fell. They must be suppressed, or all hope renounced of reaching the shining height. Watch against anger, malice, and revenge. These repel from the bosom the blessed Sanctifier, and open the soul to the devil, with his black train of guilt and woe. Watch against all rising of selfishness. This is the grand root of all sin. Unchecked, it will root all religion out of the soul, and cause it to disappear from the conduct. Watch against impure imaginations. These pollute the soul, and render it averse to all religious duties.

Guard also most vigilantly your habits. Watch against habits of sloth. This evil will cut the



the measure.

with intense solicitude your struggles  
ness.

In order to reach a high grade of  
must *live by system*. No man ever  
in anything important without system.  
God's works there is perfect order.  
why some Christians make such mea-  
sures in religion, is that they live  
Like a ship on the ocean without cha-  
rt or destination, they are driven about  
wind of doctrine, and every wave.  
The Christian of rule and principle,  
governed by its chart and compass,  
front and swelling canvas, moves al-  
ways of life safely, to the haven of et-  
ernity. One great governing principle of the  
Christian should be, that his religion :  
—first in order of time, and first in  
—first in order of all circum-



a religious tendency. By adopting this principle, one will be guided in every perplexity and uncertainty ; know what he should pursue and what he should shun. Let me first know that a Christian has committed himself to this high gospel principle, and I will tell, with prophetic certainty, what he will do in every emergency. He will have time for religion. He will rise early, redeem the time, and be regular in his habits of devotion. He will be regular in his habits of studying the word of God, and in his attendance in the house of prayer. He will be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He will have a mind and time to work for the Lord. He will be the stanch friend of Sabbath schools and revivals. In every issue between the powers of darkness and light, he will be on the side of light, diligently and boldly vindicating the truth.

We would, then, lay an emphasis on system as a means of religious growth. All who have attained eminence in religion had a place for every duty and a duty for every place. How did Baxter write so many books, preach so many sermons, and visit so constantly a large congregation ? By systematic industry. So, only have a time and place for all your duties, religious and worldly, and be prompt in discharging them ; only determine to meet in their order



Once more: there can be religious improvement without ~~the~~ the nature of the case there must be or a perpetual lifelong warfare like a piece of carpentry, that for a while, and then return at the same stage of forwardness; but in a rapid stream—the moment our boat is driven backward. To proceed, is to draw back. If one of the mightiest of the ages regard “nothing done while there is nothing to do.” By acting on this principle, the known world will shine in the annals of redemption copied so nearly the example



behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Up to the time he wrote these words, he had done more to save the world than all other men. He had surpassed all others in personal piety ; yet all this he deemed unworthy of recollection, but pressed on to still greater attainments in grace and usefulness.

In no other way, and upon no easier terms, can we reach the scriptural standard of religion. Half-hearted, sluggish exertions, will never avail. Some sick persons may get well without taking medicine. Some soils will produce crops without cultivation. Now and then a man gets a fortune without industry ; but, since the fall of Adam, no one has ever become holy without perpetual vigilance, perpetual prayerfulness, perpetual reference to the will of God—without perpetual self-restraint and attention to the eye of Him who seeth in secret. All Scripture and experience go to shew that in order to attain holiness, one must covet and pursue it more than riches, honours, and pleasures, and be willing to forego everything for it. The mighty care must be fixed upon the heart from morning till night, swallow up everything else, and lead to ceaseless diligence. It must be the firmest purpose of the soul, that sin shall not have the



...employed in mortifying a bad  
correcting a bad habit, should not

In sum, there must be *earnest a  
the means of grace*. Other good b  
be read less, but the Scriptures m  
and solemnly. Nothing must pr  
repairing daily to our closets, whe  
down at the feet of our God, and  
wrestle till He grants us a great  
His Spirit's influences. While  
business we must form the habit  
forth, at intervals, ejaculatory p  
petitions, with the quickness of t  
beyond the stars and bring down  
in every time of need. On eve  
unless prevented by pressing neces  
house of God, and while there, list  
life. In this way every service an  
strengthen in you the principles of



tion of these simple emblems, there is obtained a sight of the sin-pardoning, soul-subduing cross, that is found nowhere else. When you associate with judicious Christian friends, unbosom to them your difficulties and temptations. Their advice and instructions, and the accordance of their experience with your own will greatly encourage you in the conflict after holiness and heaven. Keep on hand and read daily a portion of such books as Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, and James's *Christian Professor*. Such books, when attentively read, quicken the conscience, impress the heart, and inform the mind. Seek the companionship of the pious. Often put the questions to yourself, Am I answering the end of my creation? Am I carrying out the end of my redemption? Is the world receiving any benefit from my sojourn in it? Have seasons for deep, fixed meditation on God, His character, government kingdom, and on your obligations to Him. As though the judgment were to-morrow, guard against every sinful thought, word, and action. By anticipation, place yourself frequently before the judgment-seat of Christ, and go over the whole of that tremendous process. Let your thoughts often dart forward to those endless ages which will succeed that dread day. Cultivate the habit of seeing and adoring God in nature and in



Hold communion with God in con  
Let the rich gifts of nature remind  
Giver. In this way the ordinary me  
and events around you, will become  
and incentives to religious grow  
attending to the means of grace, the  
channels of the grace of means to 1



## CHAPTER VI.

### MOTIVES TO HIGHER ATTAINMENTS IN PRACTICAL RELIGION.

**H**AVING seen the great cause of the slow progress of Christianity, and pointed out the prevalent defects of modern Christians ; having then ascertained the particulars in which our religion must appear in order to convince and convert the world, and then seen how such religion converts men to Christ ; and having next pointed out the means of reaching such a standard of piety, it now remains that we display some of the motives and considerations which should urge us to its cultivation ; and may the Holy Spirit aid the writer in the selection and enforcement of these motives.

The first consideration we mention is, that a thorough development of the religious principle *is the great end and purpose of God concerning*



His lost image. At the cost of infinite and sacrifices, He has been seeking from our souls the hideous likeness of to beautify, ennoble, and save us, by us again with His own forfeited image deliver up His Son to death for us? remove, on His own part, the might in the way of making depraved man. He, on the grounds of Christ's medi His Spirit into the world? It was to us the dominion of sin, and make us of His holiness. Did He inspire the apostles to write His Word? It was His Word might be the great instrument Spirit in our sanctification. Were we chosen in Christ Jesus? It is should be holy and without blame because in love." Did Jesus Christ give Him



the universe, that His people might be distinguished from mankind around them, and might differ from their former selves. That distinction and difference consist in true holiness. This too is the end of all the appliances of the church. Baptism symbolizes a death unto sin, and a resurrection unto newness of life. The design of preaching, the Lord's Supper, brotherly admonition, advice, and reproof, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures, is not so much to make us happy as to make us holy. The church that is not growing in holiness comes short of the great end of its organization.

And what mean God's providences toward us? To some He gives health, pecuniary success, blesses them in a partner for life, in children, in servants, in relations, friends, and neighbours; in all of which He is seeking to lead such to repentance. And what is repentance, but a heartfelt effort to abandon all sin and return to the favour and likeness of God? From others He takes away health, property, and friends, and in so doing He is promoting their profit, that they might be partakers of His holiness. Whether He sends prosperity or adversity, whether He gives or withholds, whether He realizes to us our brightest hopes or crushes them, it is to purify us and make us reflect



But if the people of God are from His enemies; if they are tious, covetous, selfish, and pr multitude who are professedly i the stupendous scheme of redem planned and wrought for them divine truths of the gospel have to bear on them to no practical Spirit's wooings have produced i The question then comes home fessor of God's religion, Shall this for me in vain? Shall I lo sin, when Jehovah has done so me hate and forsake it? Shall gent to renew and transform me idle in my sins? Has God lo died for me. the Spirit striven



and mental improvement the chief aim of life. This, though noble and important, falls vastly short of the end for which we have been created and redeemed. Others rise higher, and become patriots and philanthropists ; but neither patriotism nor philanthropy constitutes the great work for which the Son of God ransomed His people from sin and hell. These are duties, but not the great duty of life. If nothing more than this is done we shall miss the great business of life, and frustrate the great designs of God in regard to us. Our chief mission on earth, compared with which everything else dwindles into perfect insignificance, is to become thoroughly religious. Jesus Christ occupies the throne of mediation, sends down the Spirit, and sends forth the ministry, that He may infuse in us and develop through us His own nature and Spirit. Never will He regard His work in us as accomplished, till, through our co-operation, we are made to resemble Him in righteousness and true holiness.

Ponder it well, Christian. The sublime end of your religion is not reached till your faith in Christ has transformed all your inner nature, and displayed itself to the world in your tempers, words, and actions. This is the prize for which you are a candidate, and it must be reached or you will do nothing to enlighten and impress



tion of reaching it. Make it your long business to become a full-grown man. However repeatedly adverse it may thwart you, hold on in one unflinching effort, and you will reach the high goal, being a marked and influential divinity. While the world around us are content with mere pleasures, let Christians, for whom there is a great reward, be ambitious for distinction in their vocation. While the learned pursue science after science, the honouring the splendour and distinction, and the rich are adding possessions, let the child of grace, in God's name, add knowledge to knowledge, grace to grace, and shall have transcribed into his

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the spread of the gospel as the unholiness of its professed friends. No one thinks the less of religion, from what he sees in and hears from the avowedly irreligious. Who esteems Christianity any the less because Hume and Paine attempted to prove it an imposition? or because some wicked neighbour swears and desecrates the Sabbath? But far otherwise when professed Christians depart not from iniquity. Their inconsistencies make the unbelieving around them underestimate Christianity itself. Thousands have rejected and risen in judgment against the religion of the Bible, on account of the flagrant contradiction between the profession and the conduct of its friends.

Let the half-hearted, worldly professor, look over his life, and he will see an amount of harm done to the cause of Christ, and to the souls of men, sufficient to embitter the balance of life, and produce, if possible, anguish in heaven. He will see instances in which his lukewarmness has made some infidels, and hardened others in hopeless iniquity. The covetous and self-indulgent will see that they have caused the way of truth to be evil spoken of, and the name of Christ to be blasphemed. The hard-hearted and close-handed will see that they have kept many from embracing the gospel, and made them think that religion is a delusion. The malicious and unfor-



claim them.

It is a fearful truth, that unless we have been sufficiently religious in our influence for Christ, we have exerted it against Him. He who is not religious is against Christ. The man of letters or moral blanks in the church who professes to be a blessing or a ban to the world, a disciple, whether he designs to swell the tide that bears to perdition, or he is drawing off from his heavenward march. He is a class who attempt to amalgamate God and Mammon. They are matters too far. They attempt to find ground between Christ and Satan desires no better troops. The prince of darkness is quiet.



true, then what infinite harm are many modern professors doing the religion of Christ? How perfidiously have many misrepresented their Master, and how fatally have they misled the world! But the past cannot be recalled. We cannot roll the wheels of time backward, and undo the effects of our unfaithfulness. No tears nor reformation can counteract the trains of evil we have put in motion. But if there be in us the smallest degree of the Christian principle, let us seek to be cleansed from the guilt of our unholy influence, and arise to life and action. In God's might, let us "cease to do evil" by contradicting our profession, and "learn to do well" by adorning it.

*Consistency requires the disciples of Christ to be thoroughly religious.* Consistency is acting in harmony with one's self. Consistency requires honesty in a steward, fidelity in a servant, kindness in a friend, and gratitude to a benefactor. So soon as we know what a man professes to be, we at once determine what course of conduct becomes him. Now, when one professes the religion of Christ, he avows in the presence of heaven and earth the intention of living a new and a better life. This is the very meaning of a profession of religion. The very name Christian implies this. The vow to avoid all that God forbids and do all that He enjoins, was



world expect that our lives will  
our profession. A profession of  
in grace is religious consistency  
professes faith in Christ, and i  
duct unlike Christ, he is, o  
beings, the most inconsistent.

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yet there is one encomium we  
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consistency. There is anoth  
speculative faith in Christian



But the lukewarm professor of religion is more inconsistent than the practical atheist. He sins against his convictions, his profession, his vows, and against Christ, and his brethren. In profession he has said that Christ is "All, and in All ;" that till the day of his death he means to love Him more than mother, father, children, or life itself, and yet by his conduct, he often says, "I know not the man." In profession he has died to this world, and become the citizen of another country, and the subject of another kingdom ; but in practice, he is as deeply engrossed in this world as those who professedly belong to it. Ceremonially, he is on the Lord's side ; in reality he is on the side of Mammon. In precept he proclaims that the service of Christ is the soul's best portion, and at the same time affirms, by his conduct, that there is to be found something in the world more satisfactory. In practice, such a professor reverses the order and principles of his creed. The things which should be first are last ; and those are last which should be first. In his heart and habits, the body has assumed the place of the soul, earth of heaven, time of eternity, and self of God.

Now of all moral nondescripts, of all marvellous solecisms, of all huge inconsistencies, such temporising professors are the greatest. They are the wonders of all creation. They build up



never named the name of Christ the subject of religion, there are tent characters. One is the de and the other is the unmistak evangelical Christian. Every int acter is a hideous anomaly. W every friend of Christ, to rise distinction of Christian consiste brother! Jesus Christ sacrifice himself for you. Consistency de should zealously serve such a f and earth, good men and bad m you entirely devoted to your R thing short of flaming zeal in kingdom of such a Saviour, is a as it is frustrating to the end of y Sin is the greatest foe of God crucified the Son of God; cast



and if without holiness no one can be admitted into that pure world, what else is so legitimate, so becoming to a redeemed sinner, as constant, self-denying, vigorous efforts to acquire that holiness? If the honour of Christ, for the vindication of which ten legions of angels would dart down from their thrones, has been committed to the Churches, is not that Christian a traitor to his high trust who does not supremely and avowedly live and labour for its promotion? If there is a sense in which the salvation of the unconverted around us depends upon our agency, then what do we in this world unless we are by our prayers, exertions, and example, seeking to bring them to Christ? In sum, then, we see consistency in the infidel—soul-ruining consistency true it is. In the whole-hearted Christian we see the jewel of soul-saving consistency; but in every intermediate class there is a madness that astonishes all worlds. What a plea then is this for a radical reformation in our religion!

Another mighty motive that should induce us to make higher attainments in practical religion, *is our usefulness to others*. Both the Scriptures and experience shew that our usefulness in the world is just in proportion to the grade of our piety. The mightiest means of moral influence is not wealth, or talents, or high social position,



its adequate cause, than will manifestly the *subject* of God's the *medium* of that grace to others who "are manifestly the epistle known and read of all men," are earth and the light of the world, than one.

Take one such as the type of study his history through the will find that in all his multifarious conditions, he is in the highest sense. *View him as a citizen.* He, and the hope of this kingdom, more territory, or boasted form of government, secret of our prosperity and of nation, is not our excellent model institutions, but the confidence of the tens of thousands of



*neighbour.* He may be railed at and scorned. The old may call him a bigot, and the young may jeer him. Still his example will check vice and promote righteousness. By his prayers he wards off from the guilty their merited doom. The wicked around owe him a debt of obligation that they cannot estimate. No greater calamity could befall such a community than the removal of this God-fearing man from it. He is to those with whom he mingles a living, unanswerable argument for the truth of Christianity. He silently rolls off reproach from the religion of Christ, and where he does not win to it men's hearts, he gains the suffrage of their judgments and consciences. He restrains the vicious, convinces the gainsayers, encourages the good, and gradually produces moral renovation all around him. *Follow him into his family.* Here transpire, daily, scenes that angels linger to behold. By exemplifying before his household whatsoever things that are true, whatsoever things that are just, whatsoever things that are honest, whatsoever things that are pure, whatsoever things that are lovely, whatsoever things that are of good report, by daily leading his charge to the family altar, by maintaining order and harmony without violence or severity, by mingling cheerfulness with devoutness ; in



in a church is often more use  
ordinary professors. By the  
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*amid wrongs and persecuti*



power of Christianity. Nor does his usefulness cease when he is sick and bedridden. We often misjudge, and suppose that when the child of grace is laid aside from his labours, the period of his usefulness has closed, when really, by his patience and calmness under his suffering, he often does more good than he did when he exerted himself openly and actively. The true Christian is never laid by. The influence that goes from him while languishing, is often greater than when in the fulness of health he took the lead in each benevolent enterprise. It is on sick-beds, and in the near prospect of death, that the sustaining power of Christianity is most strikingly displayed. Nor does the usefulness of the Bible Christian terminate with his life. After the grave has covered his form, "he being dead yet speaketh." His memory admonishes and encourages more powerfully than even his living example.

Would you then, upon the broadest possible scale, do good ; would you pass your days in the most useful manner, give the church and your generation the greatest reason to bless God for your existence ; then determine, in God's strength, that you will be a New Testament Christian. In no other way can you be a blessing to the world.

Another consideration, urging to the attain-



in contempt ; still, nothing in  
character with such moral dign  
as the religion of Christ. It is  
nor learning, nor splendid r  
achievements, that impart true  
To stand high in the estimat  
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would to behold the grandest productions of nature and art.

In the hour of conversion the formation of the Christian's character commences. The image of God is then enstamped on his soul, and shines out in progressive beauty. In his life the loveliness of Christ is more and more manifested, till it matures into a beauteous diadem for his brow, and invests his whole character with a halo of glory. His exterior may be unlovely ; he may be unrefined, without wealth and learning. He may live in some rude hut, unknowing and unknown ; still, angels are his companions and life-guards. Gabriel would leave his throne and pass by palaces and halls, to lift the cup to his thirsting lips. Ten thousand of these holy and mighty beings watch over him, sympathise with him, and rejoice over him, as a valuable addition to God's great kingdom of virtue. True, he may not be allied to any of the great of earth, but he has God for his Father, Jesus Christ for his elder Brother, and the Holy Ghost for his Sanctifier. He is a prince in disguise. His name may not be on the page of worldly fame, but it is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. He may die unwept and unsung, yet over his dying couch waves the white banner of the Prince of life. His death is precious in the sight of the Lord ; and then at the judgment-seat of Christ, when



occupy a throne above the

How do all the glory of (the 'honours of earth's batt  
titles, pale before the bright  
of being a New Testament (the  
high honour of wearing  
what care I for the world's pr  
or dead, I can say, "Carve  
not a stone, but leave *me al*  
Striking, growing, Christ-li  
lovely than anything else  
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the magnificent building as  
from its foundation into con  
finitely delightful then, to all  
the penitent sinner first lay  
faith in Christ, and then a  
excellency to excellency, till



others besides the doting parents, it is deeply interesting to mark the development and growth of the physical and mental powers of the healthy infant : to see its tender limbs maturing, its reason dawning, acquiring by degrees the art of walking and talking, and gradually reaching manhood. So to God and all good beings, it is lovely to witness a new-born babe in Christ first yield obedience to Christ's positive commands, then acquiring clearer views of truth and duty, now overcoming and correcting a sinful habit, anon resisting Satan's fiery darts ; further on, becoming meeker, and more patient and resigned, amid wrongs and losses ; then coming out of a fiery trial with his faith strengthened, his love inflamed, and his deadness to the world increased ; and thus on, till he attains to spiritual manhood. Such a sight is more pleasing to God than anything else that transpires in His universe. It is entertaining to watch a master artist sketch the rude outline of a friend's picture, and then by adding shade after shade, feature after feature, make that friend stand out on the canvas in life-like appearance. So what is more admirable than to behold the disciple of Christ continuing to think of, commune with, pray to, and follow after, his great Model ; copying into his life and character, trait after trait of his Saviour, until he "is changed into the same



beams, and fogs condense then  
they would shroud the earth from  
but we have watched the orb come  
up the skies, scattering the gloom  
after having diffused life over the  
in floods of molten light. This  
beautiful ; but far less so than  
Christian who, by faith, first turned  
Sun of righteousness, and came  
ness, and then on through life  
that light in a consistent exaltation  
down in the West of a triumph  
again in the undying splendour  
East. We record the deeds,  
and embalm the memories of conquerors ; but what in point of



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of grace has the honour that comes from God. The learned ? The believer is wise unto salvation. God himself pronounces such more excellent than his neighbour, however distinguished that neighbour may be. Nay, he stands higher than Adam stood before his fall.

Would you then, Christian brother, occupy this high grade in the scale of being ? would you have a character that will win the admiration of all classes and all worlds ? would you on earth be the highest style of man, and stand high at the great judgment-day ? Then, in reliance on God's Spirit, see to it that you believe in Christ more strongly, love Him more ardently, and copy His example more closely. No higher encomium can be paid a human being ; there is no higher standard for any of God's creatures to reach ; no nobler epitaph can be inscribed upon the tomb of any, than that he was a Bible Christian.

“ Who would not be a Christian ? I have seen  
Men shrinking from the term, as if it brought  
A charge against them. Yet the honour'd name  
Is full of gentlest meaning ; odours rise  
And beauty floats around it.  
Hark ! 'tis the loftiest name the language bears,  
And all the languages in all the worlds  
Have none so sublime. It relates to Christ,  
And breathes of God and holiness,  
By the rich graces of the Holy Ghost,



Another argument for a higher personal religion is, *that it will procure a higher degree of happiness.* Says Bacon, "The laws of God and man are bound together by adamantine ties." God himself cannot break them. Hence man increases in misery as he increases in sin. It is upon this principle that the most miserable being is the most miserable being in the world because he is the most depraved.

So, on the other hand, there is a necessary connexion between holiness and happiness. He is the most happy being in the universe who is the most holy ; and the holiest people, the world over, is just in proportion as they resemble Him in righteousness and holiness. Heaven is a world of supreme happiness, because it is a world of supreme holiness, and hell is a world of supreme misery, because it is a world of supreme depravity and sin.



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recorded and unrecorded experience of all has been, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." We can no more expect to find happiness in the pursuits and objects of this world than we may expect to find

"Mellow grapes beneath the icy pole ;  
Blooming roses on the cheek of death ; or  
Substance in a world of unsubstantial shades."

But in the likeness and service of Christ is found a happiness, pure, elevating, perennial, inexhaustible ; a happiness that will go with us in all conditions, all lands, and all worlds.

Why then, if Christianity in document is adapted to impart to its friends such peace, are there so many professors disquieted in spirit—harassed by misgivings and fears? They who ought to be the happiest people out of heaven seem in some instances to be the most depressed and gloomy ; and what should be added in this connexion is, that this unhappiness in professed Christians not only unfits them for extensive usefulness, but gives religion a repulsive aspect to those without. Since, then, unhappiness is so prevalent among the avowed friends of Christ, and since this want of happiness has such a detrimental effect on them and the irreligious, why, it is most seasonable to ask, do such Christians find so little pleasure in religion? Surely in this matter they are not straitened in God.




ence of morbid temperament  
of all this sadness and depress  
of Christ is the small degree  
The only reason why they are  
because they "follow the Lord  
writer has said, "A little religion  
miserable, and much will make  
One single uncrucified, unbaptized  
not only destroy all religion  
open the soul to the devil, with  
train of guilt and misery. "  
(said Whitefield, placing his hand  
while preaching in an open field  
lustre of the sun from my eyes  
will shut out from the soul the  
of the Sun of righteousness, and



## ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION. 175

feelings, and actions to please God. In whose heart will God be more likely to shed abroad His soul-refreshing love than in the heart of the man who follows Him most fully? Whose mornings will be bright, noons calm, and evenings serene, if not the man's whose daily aim is to bring his inner and outer life to accord with God's will? After all, the great secret of being happy is to be holy. He who grows in practical religion, has opened within and without a thousand sources of true bliss. The joy arising from harmony between the passions and the conscience—the joy arising from victory over inward and outward foes—the joy arising from new views of divine truth—the joy arising from usefulness—the joy arising from communion with God—the joy arising from the approbation of God—the joy arising from the Spirit's gracious influences—the joy arising from the study of nature, providence, and the Scriptures—and the joy arising from a well-grounded hope of heaven, all belong to the man who "grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The golden fruit of happiness grows only on the tree of holiness. If happiness is sought in any other way than by being holy, it is sought in vain. We owe it to ourselves, to the world around us, and the honour of Christ, to rejoice in the Lord. But the only way to rejoice in it





Lord? Would you have all  
and all before you become  
you have God the Father  
fulness of His forgiving love  
up His abode with you and  
to you, and God the Spirit  
with His comforting and  
Would you be enabled to  
judgment-throne and see  
would you sing a cheerful  
your pilgrimage? Then de  
attain to more than custom  
the things that are behind,  
measure of the stature of  
Fast, pray, read, strive, and  
of Christ is impressed more



## ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION. 177

deceived in their hopes for eternity, than there are in this age. Let any one observe the wide discrepancy between the Christian character, as it is drawn in the Scriptures, and as it appears in actual life, and he will be convinced of the truth of this statement. What says Christ? "*Many* shall come unto Me in that day, and shall say, Lord ! Lord ! and I will profess unto them, I never knew you." In the light of God's Scriptures we are forced to the conclusion that very many bearing the name of Christ are going down to the grave "with a lie in their right hand," and instead of meeting, as they expect, the smiles of angels, and the plaudits of the Redeemer, will hear the thunders of wrath and the wailings of the lost.

Are there, then, on this side of the grave, attainable, infallible evidences of our adoption into the divine family and heirship to heaven ? There are. We need not die and go all the way to the judgment-seat to find out whether we are in a saved state. We may as certainly test our religious characters, and know what will be our condition in eternity, as if we heard our doom from the lips of the final Judge. What are these unmistakable marks of salvation ? There are many ; but there is one, more to be depended on than all others, and without which all others are delusive. On it our Lord and His apostles



ordinances as they were delivered by Judas, Demas, and Alexander. Not in zeal and in the pronouncing shibboleths. All these may, or may not, be tests of a saved state. These are common to be distinguishing instances they are counterfeited. The evidence in question is unerring. To be a Christian, as certainly to be the word of God. This proof is in and impartial obedience to the law. Not more certainly does a person prove the existence of a pure fountain than the goodness of the tree, than a religious life prove the existence of the principle. From other causes of influence one may have joy. From motives, besides the love and glory of God, he may be moral in the worldly aspects.



## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 179

holiness, in the life, prove the genuineness of our faith in Christ. To the great question then, Who are New Testament Christians? we reply, Only those who resemble Christ in their lives and characters.

The great reason why so many professors walk in darkness and are oppressed with doubts, is not because they have ill health and morbid temperaments, but because of the low type of their religion. A small degree of religion, whether in ourselves or others, is scarcely perceptible. To be discernible, it must be vigorous in principle and in life. Hence all other evidences of a state of grace are fallacious if they are unaccompanied by personal holiness. If from month to month, and from year to year, there be no improvement in the Christian life, then must our case be dark and doubtful. Whatever zeal we may display in defending our creed; however well we may converse upon religious subjects; no matter how much we may enjoy ourselves under preaching and in religious conversation; whatever bright discoveries we may have had concerning Christ; however confident we may be of our acceptance with God,—if still our hearts are set on gain; if we are engrossed in the world; are aspiring after its honours; are proud, discontented, revengeful, slothful, sensual, unfeeling, vain of our attainments, un-



we have any religion at all, -  
buried under the ashes of our idle a

Still more doubtful is our case  
advancing in holiness, we decline  
may be overtaken and fall into  
Thus did David and Peter. This  
but when followed by repentance, s  
less unfavourable than that regul  
which admits of no intervenings  
Pleurisy and pneumonia may k  
they greatly alarm and endanger li  
they soon pass away and give plac  
health. Whereas consumption, t  
tacks are gentle, gradual, and 1  
always ends in death. Now I wi  
the hectic in religion is hopeless ;  
allowed on all hands that the ch  
fully against him. Remaining :  
still more declining in religion, is



## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 131

Would you then, disciple of Christ, answer affirmatively the great question, "Am I a Christian?" Would you have an evidence of your religious state that will displace every doubt? Would you have a proof that is scriptural, satisfactory, and reasonable—one that will stand the test of examination, the test of affliction and death, and the severer test of the great day of judgment? Then with the Bible in your hand, the world around you, and eternity before you, seek to correct all in you that is wrong, and confirm all that is right. Aim every day to copy more closely the example of Christ; to make more and more apparent and attractive His image in your life and character. Let it be your chief work, under the sun, to bring all your feelings, sentiments, habits, and plans, under the control of the religious principle. Make Christianity the great business-guide and ornament of your life. Strive, read, watch, hear, restrain, and pray, till it mingles with and sanctifies all your secular affairs; sheds its pure and celestial tints over the whole of your character, leaving nothing about you unirradiated with its beams.

Living thus, the Father and the Son will take up their abode with you; the Spirit will bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God; you will, from your own experience, know



and eternity, I know it  
and am persuaded that He  
which I have committed to  
day." And your neighbor  
you, will exclaim, Let us live  
death of the righteous.

A high grade of persons  
*suitable and acceptable to*  
*Christ for what He has done*  
how much owest thou to  
archives of antiquity, draw  
take the wings of an angel  
worlds, and you can find  
like that which Jesus Christ  
you. Unasked, unsolicited  
your merits or desires, He  
and placed himself in the



been pressed to your lips through eternity. On the cross He died a death of which it is fearful even to read, that you might not die that second death that never dies. In sum, look backward, and think what He has done for you ; look upward, and think what He is now doing for you ; and look forward, and think what He will do for you. Your pardon, your justification, your reconciliation to God ; your peace of mind, your hope of heaven, your triumph in death, your admission into Paradise, your glorious resurrection, your being crowned at the great day, and your occupying a throne in heaven, have all been secured to you by the death and intercession of Jesus Christ. Oh, if in the universe there be such a thing as obligation, then are the redeemed under the most soul-moving obligation to the Redeemer ! Christian brother ! in the hour of your conversion, when you dropped the dreadful calculation of endless sorrow, and cherished for the first time the hope of heaven, you asked, and are still asking, " Lord, what wilt thou have me do ? " " What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits ? " How shall I make some returns to Him ?

You owe it to Him to love Him more than father, mother, wife, children, or life itself. The dearest earthly friend should give place to Him in your heart. You owe it to Him to repose in



cherish toward Him. A true  
breath of love, and loud as thou  
you should offer Him. You  
speak of Him and exert your  
cause. But all this, though  
the most acceptable offering y  
most approved offering you  
holiness of life. Thankslivin  
ing in His sight than than  
holiness no man can please  
vice, in every other respect, v  
to Him so long as you cruci  
one habitual sin. Your f  
spurious, so long as you hu  
spear of unbemoaned lusts.  
approves is that which lea  
commandments. The faith  
honours Him is that vital pri  
the heart and character. T



## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 185

are petitions for grace to resist sin and follow after holiness.

We would not be misunderstood. We would not make holiness take the place of Christ's death. That were to subvert the whole gospel, offend God, and make our perdition sure; but holiness, as the development of our faith in the atoning cross, is an indispensable part of gospel salvation, and is infinitely pleasing and honouring to Christ, because in the sanctification of His people He achieves the great end for which He died. In the economy of our redemption has He not inseparably joined together justification and sanctification? And is not the latter just as essential to our admission into heaven as the former? The truth is, no doctrine is in this age so unpopular and so much overlooked as the subject of holiness. How few books and sermons urge it with any prominence! Writers and preachers are sensitive lest, in the world's estimation, they put forth a legal gospel. Now in this particular we must return to the first principles of the gospel. Shall we cease to proclaim and practise it because Papists and legalists have perverted it from its scriptural connexion? Was not holiness a great theme of Christ's ministry? How constantly and fully do the apostles urge it in their epistles! And is it not upon one page of God's book, in letters of living



ages, for the city and the country and the rude, for the ministry and demands, as an indispensable condition discipleship, that there be a freedom from all sin, and a striving after perpetual holiness.

Would you then have a religion and model of Christ? Would you of the genuineness of your love both God and men demand of you attain the great end Christ bids you? Nay, would you give joy to the world by being crucified for you on the cross? The reality and in appearance more religious.

Another plea which must tell in *form their opinions of Christianity what they see in the spirit and professors.* But few irreligious



## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 187

the fact that Jesus Christ died and arose again, and commanded the apostles to preach the gospel to every creature. They never investigate, and consequently are not convinced by the mighty array of evidence that attests the truth of Christianity. But the mass of mankind do canvass Christianity as it appears in the life of its friends. The life and conduct of Christ's disciples is an epistle "known and read of all men." Every Christian's life is a volume read and studied through and through. Most men care not for the apparent discrepancies in the Scriptures, but every discrepancy in the example of the Christian, every blot and blur, every real and apparent contradiction in the living epistles, is by them scrutinized with the deepest interest.

From different motives different classes read and scan Christians. Though in so doing they act on a principle they repudiate in everything else, one class persist in judging Christ and His religion by Christians, and not Christians by Christ and the Scriptures. With a shrewdness sharpened by enmity, they eagerly watch the tempers and conduct of Christians, not to remove but to confirm their prejudices. Though steeped to the lips themselves in profligacy, whenever they detect some minor fault in the friends of Christ, they exultingly proclaim that such are fallen from grace. Now woe to this class if pro-



mark and study your temper and feelings of curiosity. Others observe they may detect your inconsistencies justify and confirm their infidelity. different motives do most of the in your life. Some are honestly halt embrace Christianity, from a secret They watch you that they may help from you, and see something in remove their difficulties, and desert Christ. Accordingly, they will incline of infidelity or to the side of Christ. Conduct of Christians impresses them unfavourably. In settling the question whether Christianity is true or the only standard they will accept is the consistent life of Christians. Of sceptics and semi-sceptics are

Give us example as we



## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 189

them for instruction and encouragement. Many a young convert, in determining whether he has been converted, not only appeals to the experience of some older Christian, but takes his manner of life for his model. The unbelieving husband will be convinced of the truth of Christianity, not so much from what he reads and hears: he forms his views of religion from the temper and conduct of his professing wife. The child forms its views of religion, not so much from what it hears in the pulpit or in the Sabbath-school, as from the temper and demeanour it sees in its parents. The only representative that Christianity has in many a neighbourhood is a small church. In other communities there are only a few of Christ's friends. The appreciation in which such communities hold Christianity, will be just in proportion as such Christians evince the spirit of Christ in their walk and conversation. In many a family the only exponent and witness of Christ and His religion is a wife, daughter, or servant. Such families will take their type of belief, or disbelief, in religion, from the manifestations of it they behold in these professors.

What mighty interests, then, depend on the manner in which Christians demean themselves! No other beings in any other world are the depositories of such a vital trust. Every step the



In this item, then, here is the  
for a higher grade of religion.  
us will be made the friends o  
according as our representati  
accurate or inaccurate; if o  
Christ will make men think ligh  
if on the other hand, the more c  
Him, the more highly will they  
on the one hand by violating  
we make infidels and repel th  
and on the other by adornin  
effectually convince and win  
then "what manner of persons  
in all holy conversation and g  
ciples of Christ! the most i  
interests are committed to you.



angels are, or can do, can add one gleam to God's essential glory ; nor can the depravity of bad men and angels diminish it. But it is otherwise with God's *declarative* or *manifestative* glory. This, wicked men can hinder and tarnish ; and righteous men can maintain and promote. In this sense, believers, throughout the Scriptures, are required to glorify God. What mean such commands as these ? " Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, *and glorify your Father* which is in heaven." " For ye are bought with a price ; *therefore glorify God* in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." " Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, *unto the glory and praise of God.*"

All God's works glorify Him ; but the blazing of a thousand suns reflect not so brightly His honour, as the transformation of one sinner from sin to holiness. One instance of sound conversion, and progressive sanctification, secures to God's name a richer revenue of praise than all that shines above and blooms beneath. On such a mind the image of God is enstamped ; in such a life the beauty of God shines ; and in such a character the loveliness of God is begun. The creation of worlds and the revolution of empires are trifling displays of God's power and glory, compared with the deliverance of ~~one~~



a beautiful vessel of God's me-  
trophy of the Redeemer's cr  
gem in His mediatorial crow

But to attain the high  
honouring Christ, it is not e  
regenerated. In addition to  
on unto perfection." In re  
glorify Christ so much by wh  
fess, and say, as by what we  
be. Says Christ, "Herein is  
fied, that ye bear much fruit."  
in the fruits of the Spirit, in  
Redeemer in the esteem of  
more brightly the sun shines,  
ly does it declare the glory of  
elevated and obvious our re



## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 193

the ranks of darkness, and the salvation of the world be mightily hindered. Compared with the honour of the Saviour, everything else is lighter than vanity. Nothing else is so sacred and precious. Ten thousand eager angels would at the least signal rush down from their thrones for its vindication. The Christian who does not cherish a holy jealousy for his Lord, who does not mourn when his Master is dishonoured, and rejoice when He is exalted, is not worthy of his name.

What a motive this for us to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things! We can neither preach nor write away the reproach that has been cast on Christ's name and cause. The only way to do it is to exhibit steadily and brightly a religious example. Let this most mighty of all weapons, then, be wielded for Him. Hundreds are questioning His divine character and power. Let us, both by precept and example, make a bold stand for Him against such contemners. All around us are infidels in theory, and more in practice, who are casting upon His adorable character the imputation of falsehood, casting His sacred honour in the dust; nay, labouring in mad enmity to extinguish the last ray of His glory from the earth. Let us oppose such a heresy with high-toned personal religion, and such infidels will at once encounter an ex-



and then by their daily conduct  
not the man." Of all classes  
most deeply. Their lives ten  
be an impostor, and His relig  
Let us so imbibe and display  
that the testimony of such t  
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trayers, let the majority of C  
for Him, and the world will be  
Another class defame the C  
impeach God's wisdom, imp  
and complain and repine un  
dences. Let the friends of  
reproach by displaying before  
of patience, submission, and  
all the losses, trials, and cross  
may be visited. Others are



hostility to the divine throne; and that is to reflect before them the spirit and image of Christ in our life. The secret of conquering such foes for our King is to imitate that King in our manner of living. But most deeply and tenderly do men dishonour God by rejecting His only-begotten Son. No other insult equals this. This is to pour contempt on His character and throne. No other wrong from puny man is so unprovoked, and so frustrating to the designs and glory of God. Now, whole-hearted Christians have it in their power to do much towards overcoming this great sin. In no other way can we so effectually convince men of the guilt of unbelief, and induce them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as by shewing them our faith by our works. Faith embodied is the most powerful refutation of scepticism, and the most resistless plea for embracing the world's Redeemer. So that if we would honour our God and Saviour upon the broadest possible scale, do more to recover to Him the glory of which the fall defrauded Him than the shining of all the suns, and the shouting of all the angels; then we must make it our chief business on earth to conform our lives to Christ, our Pattern and Exemplar, as well as to trust Him as our atoning sacrifice.

*A high standard of personal religion has a*



a death greatly mourned, but, unbeliever more effectually than specially encouraging to other Christians is an unutterable joy to the dying saint. Such a departure out of time into eternity, a mighty, tangible illustration of the importance of Christianity, useful to "precious in the sight of the Lord." Christians as Payson, Boardman, Carr and Havelock, did much for the cause by their manner of living; but it is not questioned whether they did not do more for that cause by their manner of dying. Their entrance into the kingdom above, like Payson's, so radiant, so glorious, so triumphant, tell for the honour of Christ and for the glory of the Church through all time. What are all the riches, and pleasures of earth compared with such an end! Who would not



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## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 197

But how can we make our life thus end? Are such deaths the sovereign vouchsafements of God's grace, irrespective of the life and character of those who die them? We think not. We believe men generally die as they live. If any die a safe, triumphant death, after having lived wicked lives, they are the exception to, and not the rule of the divine arrangement. The Scriptures and experience go to shew that there is the same connexion between a religious life and a victorious death, that there is between sowing and reaping. Mark how clearly the apostle Peter states the connexion between eminent piety in life and a happy death. "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Now, this abundant entrance, which means a happy, glorious death, depends upon doing certain things the apostle had mentioned. What are those things? Why, the adding to our "faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." In other words, a triumphant admission into the heavenly world when we die is conditioned on high attainments in personal religion; and the ~~man~~



whirlwind? Elijah, who made  
cause all and in all. Who, in t  
"fell on sleep?" David, who  
"served his own generation by t  
Whom did God dismiss from t  
by telling him, "Go thou thy w  
be; for thou shalt rest, and stand  
end of the days?" Daniel, w  
darkness, corruptions, trials, an  
a heathen court, remained the  
vant and representative of C  
claimed, "Lord, now lettest Th  
depart in peace, according t  
Simeon, who "was just and de  
the consolation of Israel." W  
to death, "saw the Lord Jesus  
"and said



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## *ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 199

righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day?" Paul, who of all whose names shine in the annals of redemption, trod most closely in the footsteps of his Master. Who, when entering the dark valley, exclaimed, "I am going to Mount Zion! I am going to the city of the living God!" "I swim in a river of pleasure! I swim in a flood of glory?" Edward Payson, one of the brightest exemplifications of modern Christianity. And to mention but one more—out of the twice ten thousand whose passage into eternity has been flooded with light and glory—who was it that recently said, while dying, "For more than forty years I have so ruled my life that when death came I might face it without fear;" "I die happy and contented;" "Come, my son, see how a Christian can die?" It was General Havelock, who for more than forty years had victoriously fought the battles of his country and his God.

So then, Christian brother, would you, at life's close, have the monster fall stingless at your feet? would you die without a doubt of your final salvation? would you have angels unseen hover around your couch, and when the last breath is out, escort your spirit to Abraham's bosom? O then, live the Christian's life! Every



you have justifying faith, live out, live out, that faith : with years, grow in grace. In this way safely, gloriously, and usefully.

*Our closing plea is, that in life we live for eternity.* There are questions that come home to us with the weight of a thousand worlds. First, Is there another life when we cease to be when we cease to live? There is, according to the plain teaching of the Scriptures, another state of being entered at death, with all our powers and faculties. Secondly, Has our manner of life on earth any connexion with our well-being in heaven? Is there any known reward for the character we form on earth? Is there any punishment we receive in heaven? There are answers, with sunbeam clearness, to all these questions, and what we must



While our admission into heaven will be entirely on the score of grace, it is also true that our reward will be in proportion to our standard of holiness. Heaven is a world of supreme religious honour and enjoyment. Hence the higher the standard we reach here, the brighter our crown, and the greater the degree of our bliss there.

We trench, then, not in the least on the doctrines of grace, we write scripturally and reasonably, when we affirm that of all on earth, he is making the surest work for eternity who is the most religious in time. What other men do, as to their authors at least, either terminates with the brief day of this life, or follows them into eternity as sources of pain. All that statesmen, scholars, economists, warriors, poets, moralists, and philosophers are achieving, however useful to the world, is of no avail to their authors beyond the grave. If the enjoyments and employments of heaven consisted in the mere continuation of the different laudable enjoyments and employments of earth, then all ~~these~~ different classes would be transmitting a good influence for themselves beyond the grave. But heaven is not the abode for the learned, the sages, the poets, philosophers, patriots, the refined, and noble. It is a place where the redeemed meet



pensed a thousand-fold. So that  
perfection of the religion we can  
earth. And if this be so, then  
golden harvest of everlasting life to  
sow to the Spirit here ; to wear the  
we must bear the cross here ; we  
Christ implicitly, and imitate Him  
this world, to have a seat near Him  
that.

Would you then, Christian brother,  
most of this life for that? Would  
your manner of life tell for the good  
in this world, and be a safeguard  
self against the evils of the world?  
Would you, in death, lay your head  
of Christ without alarm? Would  
judgment-seat, hear the "Well do  
Judge, have Him single you out, a



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*ATTAINMENTS IN RELIGION.* 203

in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Let the day on which some attainment in personal religion has not been made, be mourned over, and written down in the calendar of life, as a day lost.

THE END.



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